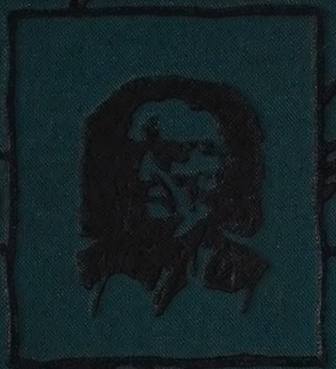

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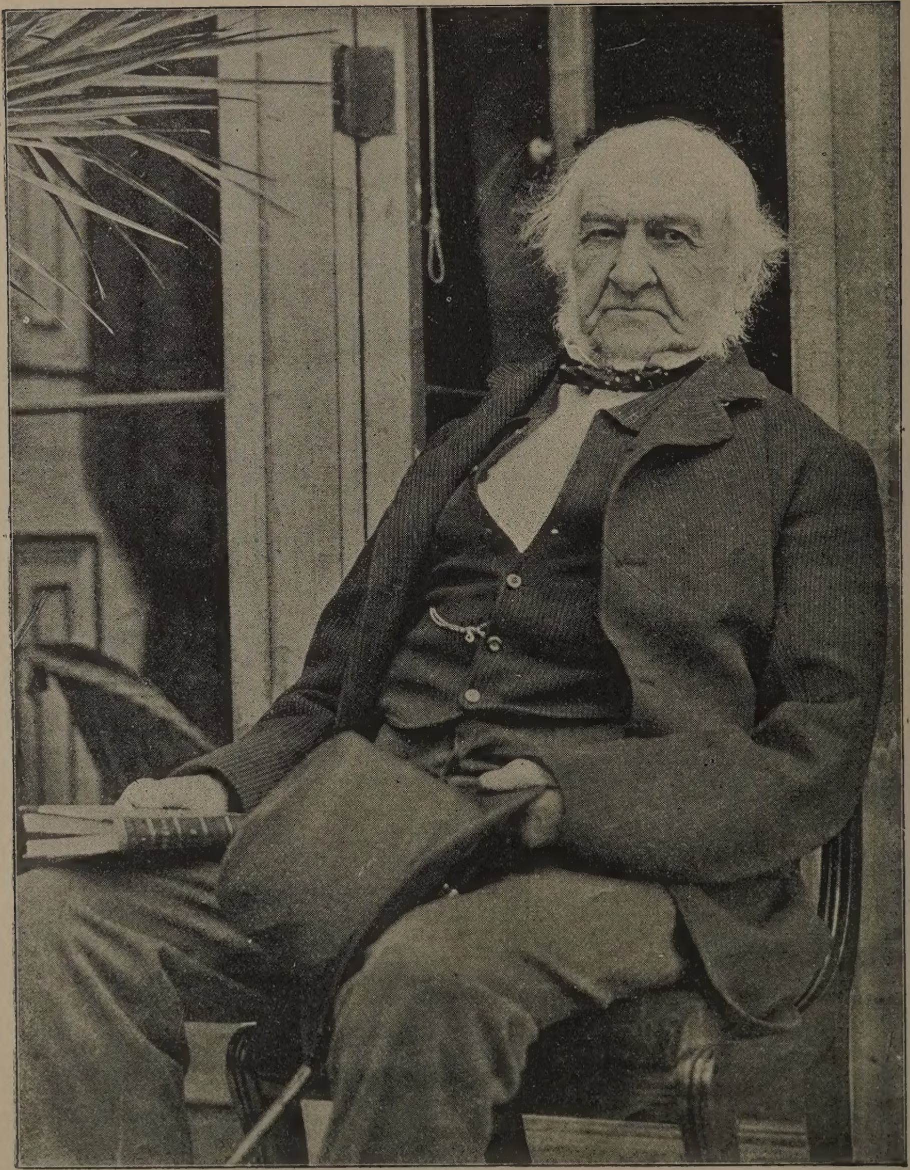

MR. GLADSTONE IN 1893.

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LIFE AND WORK

OF

MR. GLADSTONE

A GREAT AND VARIED CAREER

Early Opportunities and Surroundings—Love for Christianity—His Share in the Free Trade Movement—Promotion of Liberty and Self-Government in Italy, Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom—A Splendid Financier—Loyalty to the Queen, and Remarkable Colonial Policy—His Aid in the Reform of the Franchise—Disestablishment of the Irish Church—Ecclesiastical Controversies and Religious Views—Great Rivals and Contemporaries—Stirring Scenes in Political Struggle and National Statecraft—The Irish Drama and the Peers—A Great Orator, Brilliant Leader, Statesman, Theologian, and Scholar.

HIS LAST DAYS AND PEACEFUL DEATH

BY

J. CASTELL HOPKINS

Author of Life and Work of Sir John Thompson; The Sword of Islam, or Annals of Turkish Power; Queen Victoria: Her Life and Reign; Editor of Canada: an Encyclopædia of the Country.

PREFACE BY

THE HON. G. W. ROSS, LL.D., M.P.P.

Ontario Minister of Education.

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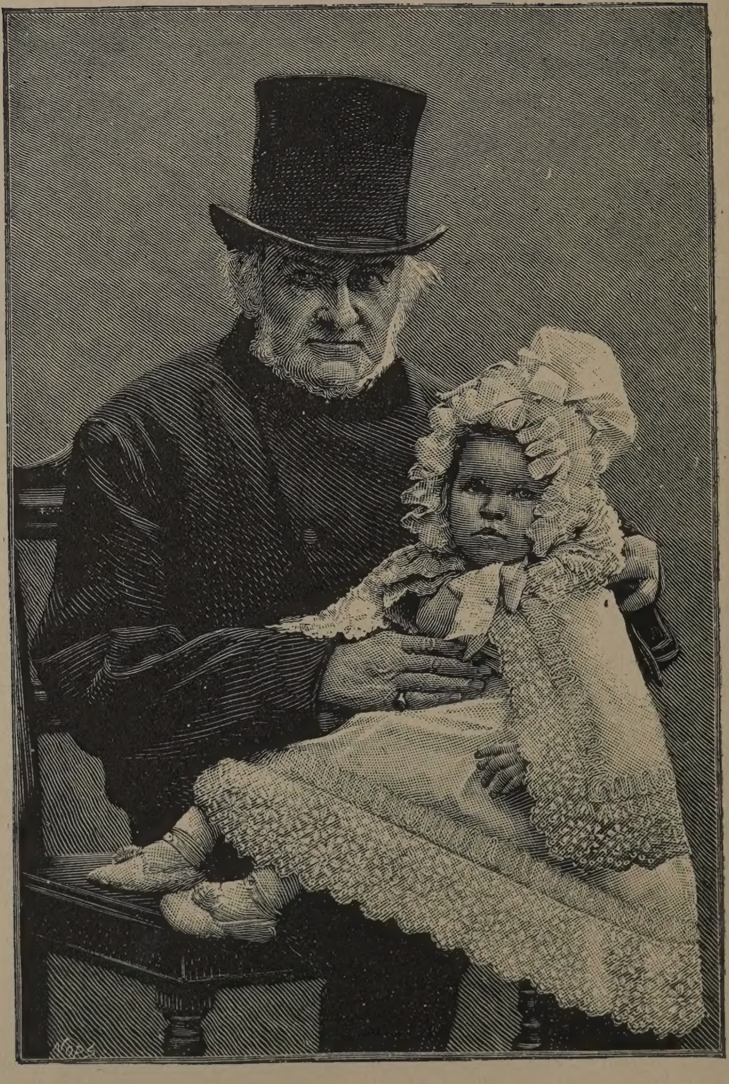
WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, AGED 6, AND HIS SISTER.



MR. GLADSTONE AND HIS FAVORITE GRAND-DAUGHTER,
DOROTHY DREW.

PREFACE

IN the century just closing the human intellect has reached a climax in its activity. The inventor has filled the world with new machinery for almost every conceivable purpose in life; the scientific man has interrogated nature more successfully than she was ever interrogated before; the merchant has explored the remotest corners of the earth to indulge the tastes or supply the wants of his customers; the philanthropist has ministered to human suffering in all its phases; in short, the whole human race seems to be moved by a supernatural impulse to assert its dominion over every force, social, physical, or political, which might impede its progress, or mar its enjoyment.

But, great as may have been the activity of those who by their achievements in science and invention gave to the civilization of the century its distinctive features, not less worthy of notice has been the activity of those men who impressed their personality upon the political institutions of the age, and probably on all ages to come. Among those worthy of special mention in the latter category, three names stand out conspicuously—Lincoln, Bismarck, and Gladstone. By Lincoln's statesmanship, a great republic was saved from destruction and disgrace; by Bismarck's statesmanship, a great empire was founded in the very heart of Europe; by Gladstone's statesmanship, the material resources of a great people were developed beyond precedent, and their political liberties, at the same time, extended and strengthened. No record of the expansion and consolidation of the British Empire would be complete which did not include the contributions received from the comprehensive statesmanship, the moral purpose, and the dignified self-reliance which characterized the legislation and career of this marvellous man.

The circumstances under which Mr. Gladstone entered public life were by no means favourable to the development of a Liberal statesman. He was in no sense a man of the people. His father, Sir John Gladstone, though not a nobleman by birth, was all but a nobleman in affluence and social status, and the early associations of his son corresponded to the social rank of the father's household. His school and college days were spent with the sons of the English aristocracy, and, when he entered Parliament, he entered it under the patronage of the Duke of Newcastle, one of the most active Tories of the day. He was constitutionally a man of strong religious convictions, and believed that it was the duty of the State to provide for the religious, rather than the secular, education of the people. Even on the question of African slavery his opinions were by no means advanced. His address to the electors of Newark, dated October 9th, 1831, in his first Parliamentary contest, shows the conservative character of his mind. He said: "We must watch and resist that unenquiring and indiscriminating desire for change among us which threatens to produce, along with partial good, a melancholy preponderance of mischief." Out of a man so nurtured, educated, and predisposed, one could hardly look for the evolution of the greatest Liberal statesman of the century.

In analyzing the career of a great statesman, or a great leader in any department of life, we have to consider not only what he has accomplished, but the motives by which his course has been directed. Even a great career is sometimes marred by an inordinate desire for power, or for the dignity and emoluments of office. Happily, English statesmen have been remarkably free from a vicious ambition to serve their country for personal ends. This was particularly the case with such men as Peel, Lord John Russell, Derby, Palmerston, and Gladstone, all of whom gave signal proof that neither the love of office, nor even the good-will of their colleagues, would stand between them and what they believed to be their duty to the nation.

Mr. Gladstone's public career was almost exceptional in its unselfishness and independence. Had it been otherwise, he would not have abandoned the party alliances under which he entered Parliament, and thus disappoint the expectations of those "stern, unbending Tories" who looked to him as a possible leader. To seek public favour by forsaking his party, and opposing the political forces which then were dominant, was not the course which an ambitious man was likely to pursue.

If not anxious for personal distinction, what, then, was the motive power in Mr. Gladstone's many variations of political life? For it must be remembered that he opposed, in the early days of his career, almost every measure which he advocated in after life. For instance, he opposed a Ministerial scheme for dealing with Church rates in deference to the views of Dissenters, and yet, thirty years later, he carried through Parliament a bill which relieved Dissenters in Ireland from all Church rates whatsoever. He opposed a scheme of national education, and yet his Government, in 1870, gave a system of national education which revolutionized the schools of Great Britain. He opposed a bill to relieve the Jews of civil disability, and, later, was the advocate of a measure whereby all restrictions of a religious character should be removed from aspirants for Parliamentary honours. He early opposed the course pursued by the advocates of Home Rule, and, as a last closing effort of his life, he made the question of Home Rule the dominating question in British politics. Why this change of front on so many questions? Why this almost reckless challenge of the public opinion which he had himself assisted in forming? In an ordinary man, such conduct would have been fatal to success. But Mr. Gladstone had so impressed the people of England with his unselfishness, his singleness of purpose, his love for the largest liberty of action and thought, compatible with the integrity of the Empire, that the past was overwhelmed in the urgency for present action. Eloquence he had to move the masses and to arouse the dormant forces of society, such as few men possessed, and strength of character sufficient to resist undaunted both friends and foes when he felt he was in the right; but it was neither his eloquence nor his character alone that secured a leadership which all envied, and which few ever attained. The ever-present conviction that whether right or wrong, whether in advance of his time or less aggressive than some of his followers, Mr. Gladstone's only purpose was to extend the liberties of the people gave him a power over the masses which success as a legislator never would have given him.

The words, "Greater freedom for the people," were in the preamble of every bill which he introduced into Parliament, and were the refrain of every speech which he delivered during the last thirty years. They are to be found in his efforts for the extension of the franchise, for the abolition of stamp and paper taxes, for the repeal of the duties of corn, for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, for the suppression of Armenian atrocities, for the general education of the people, for Home Rule for Ireland. He always appeared as an emancipator —as the champion of somebody who was wronged or straitened in his liberties. To hear him was to feel the throbbings of liberty, because what he anticipated was sure to come to pass. To follow him was to fight under the banner of St. George, for was he not a great Englishman and a destroyer of dragons by which the masses were being devoured? To admire him, was it not to admire one of the greatest scholars of the day, and thus share in the honour which his name conferred upon his race? All these circumstances combined to give to this century one of its greatest statesmen, and England one of her greatest sons. Those who read the story of his life, so admirably set forth in the pages that follow, will have read a period of English history of transcendent interest to Canada as well as to the Empire. To Canadians, it teaches that the highest type of manhood is compatible with true statesmanship; that personal worth counts, in the long run, for more than artifice in party warfare; and that an Empire on which the sun never sets—an Empire that has commanded the devotion of such a powerful personality—is grand enough, and strong enough, and free enough, to command the undying devotion of all that is best and noblest in the most ambitious and intellectual of Canadian sons.

GEORGE W. ROSS.

TORONTO, September 10th, 1895.

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In these changes of a century, Mr. Gladstone takes a continually increasing part, and wields a steadily growing influence. During his political career, the Victorian era begins and takes its place as, perhaps, the most marvellous and beneficent period in the world's history.

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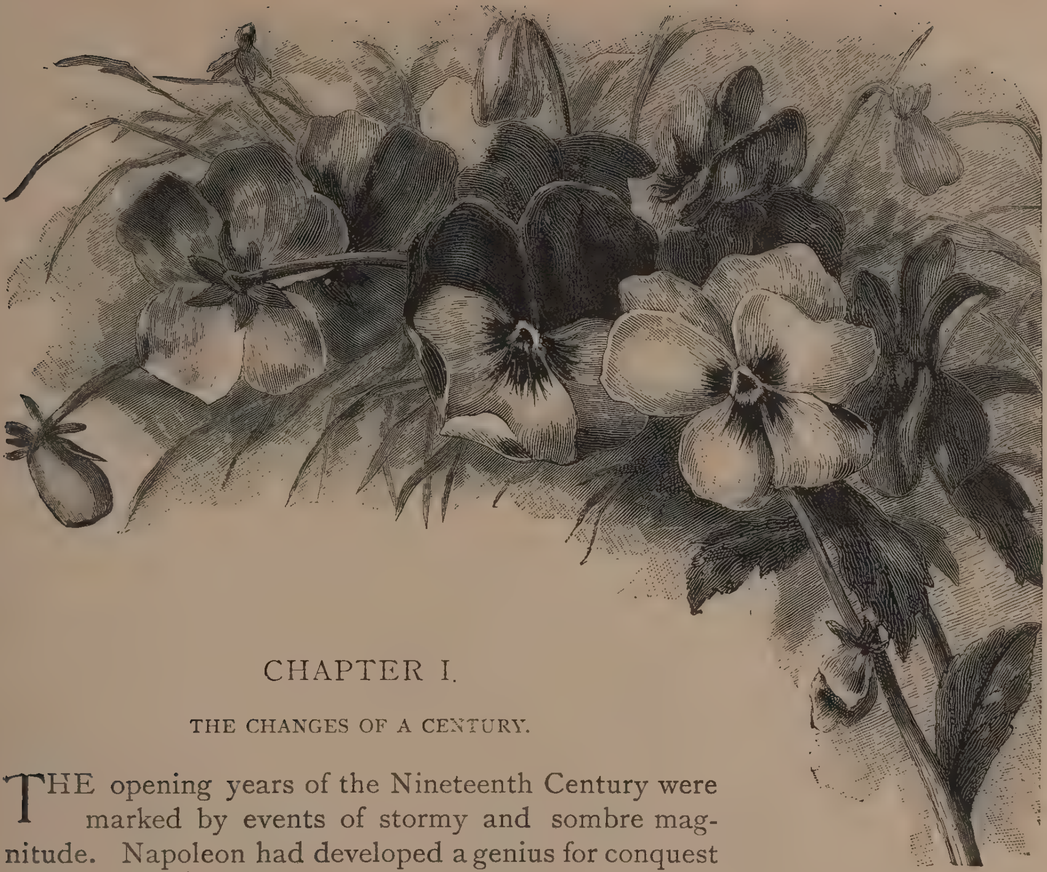

CHAPTER I.

THE CHANGES OF A CENTURY.

THE opening years of the Nineteenth Century were marked by events of stormy and sombre magnitude. Napoleon had developed a genius for conquest and a mad ambition for power which had laid the nations of Europe at his feet, and had swept over the Continent at an enormous sacrifice of life, liberty, and individual happiness. England stood alone as the guardian of European freedom, and the hope of European peoples. Pitt had made a stupendous struggle. Grand coalitions had been created, only to be shattered by the military might of the conqueror. Money had been spent like water. The British Isles were thrown into the scale, and all the dogged determination of its people had been utilized in this conflict of the ages. Trafalgar, it is true, had been won, and the seas were swept by British ships. Yet, as Pitt lay upon his deathbed at Putney in 1806, the only obstacles to the onward march of Napoleon's legions seemed to be the snows of Russia and the narrow waters of the British Channel. But Ulm and Austerlitz constituted the highest mark of French ascendency, and made the darkest moment before the English dawn. The map of Europe was not destined to be rolled up just yet. The ambition of the brilliant conqueror led to his own downfall, and the rapid whirl of events carried the Duke of Wellington into the recesses of the Imperial power at Paris. With the battle of Waterloo ended the first historic period affected by the French Revolution. The thirst for excitement and glory, the longing for war and conquest, was over for a time, and France lay bleeding and faint at the feet of its foes. But the recoil was yet to come upon other nations. Europe, it is true, was more or less settled by the Treaty of Vienna for the ensuing twenty years; and England, with apparently one long sigh of relief, had returned to the pursuits of peace. And in the reflected glory of great achievements the British people were for a brief time content. Though proud of the war, and aware of its stupendous cost, it is, however, questionable whether the inevitable results were fully anticipated by the general public. It had charged the nation with a debt equal at one time to nearly a third of all the private property in the realm. It had left the Government with an exhausted exchequer and an overtaxed population. It made the relief of a vast amount of individual distress and poverty necessary. It forced the Tory Ministry of Lord Liverpool to introduce and establish the Corn Laws, with general consent and under a pressing need for the encouragement of agriculture and the production of food. It saw the temporary collapse of commerce, and the natural exhaustion of a great nation after a prolonged struggle with the world in arms.

But there were many compensations. As a result of the stirring amongst the people which followed came the Reform Bill, and the inauguration of an era which, beginning with Wellington, and a Constitution more or less "cribbed, cabbined, and confined," culminated in Gladstone and complete freedom of government. Here appeared the secondary influence of the French Revolution. It hampered the development of moderate reform by frightening people as to the possible dangers and disasters of popular movements. The insane excesses of the French population in the earlier days of terror had converted William Pitt from a friend into an enemy of reform, and it is not surprising that his influence and example had produced a strong effect in the country. Disloyalty always weakens a party, and the foolish language used by Charles Fox at certain periods of the struggle with Napoleon had further lessened the power of the Liberals. Combining these forces with the glory derived from the great war, it is not surprising that the Tory party, under Liverpool, Canning, and Wellington, held the reins of power with a tight hand for the fifteen years which followed Waterloo.

It was a time of transition. Discontent was rife, poverty was widespread, riot and disturbance were greatly prevalent. The people wanted something, though they hardly knew what it was. Ignorance was still plentiful and powerful amongst the masses. Parliament had, during many decades, proved itself strong in contests with the Crown; it had yet to show itself strong in championing the domestic, social, and political interests of the people. It was probably a wise dispensation, and one which has been of frequent occurrence in the history of British politics, that a Conservative and slow-moving party should have been in power during a period of great popular restlessness and of education in the principles of reform or of change. Evolution, not revolution, is the English motto and the English practice, and times of transition occasionally require strong treatment.

And the Sovereign was still very far from being a constitutional ruler of the Victorian type. The Prince Regent, in 1819, had dissolved Parliament without notice. George III. had refused to allow Pitt his own way in Ireland; and George IV. had fought against Catholic emancipation for many years, and in defiance of popular opinion. William IV. resisted the Reform Bill till the verge of revolution was reached, and then wisely gave way. It was not till after the latter period that the full measure and necessity of ministerial responsibility was recognized by the monarch, and accepted and understood by the people. The position of affairs during these years of fiery oratory, of suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, of legislation against seditious meetings, of Peterloo massacres and numerous riots, may be summarized in very few words. On the one side were honest fears of popular government engendered by French crimes in the name of liberty, and a belief, not unreasonable in itself, that the people were unprepared for full and free Parliamentary rule. To the Tories of that day reform naturally meant revolution; and the more numerous the riots, the larger the public meetings, the more violent the language of agitators like Henry Hunt, the stronger grew this impression.

On the other side there was a steady education of the people in the principles of Parliamentary government. The agitation for the relief of the Catholics from their many disabilities; the wide influence and circulation of Cobbett's somewhat incendiary writings; the admission of Catholics and Dissenters to the Army and Navy; Lord John Russell's resolutions in favour of reform, beginning with the year 1820; Brougham's somewhat reckless but always brilliant displays of Radicalism; Huskisson's commercial reforms; the repeal of various limitations upon the personal freedom of workingmen—all contributed to the training of the people in the duties and responsibilities of full self-government. And no one who understands the general condition of the country at that time, and thinks, for instance, of the senseless riots against the use of power-looms and the development of mechanical arts, will now regret that time was allowed for this popular evolution.

The reform of the franchise in 1832, and the impulse then given to national development and necessary change, marked the end of the period which had been influenced by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. It was the turning-point on a road of progress which is impressed along nearly its whole course by the influence of Mr. Gladstone, and is distinguished in all its latter portions by the predominating impulse of his ambition and earnestness. That period and that development is the most remarkable in the history of the world. It has given the watchword of genuine liberty and constitutional self-government to countless millions in this and coming centuries. It has changed the destiny of civilized humanity:

"Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet;
Above her shook the starry lights—
She heard the torrents meet.

Then stepp'd she down through town and field
To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to man revealed
The fullness of her face.

It was the golden era of Colonial development, and has been permeated with the progress of British settlement; the expansion of British commerce; the growth of British interests and institutions abroad. By the Peace of Paris, Great Britain came into possession of Malta, Mauritius, Ceylon, and the Cape. It was, in the main, undeveloped, and, apparently, not very useful territory, except for military or naval purposes. Australia was then a penal settlement. Canada was largely a waste, and seemed chiefly known in Europe by the French King's description as being only "a few acres of snow." The population of what a writer of the period* terms "this great Empire" was 61,000,000 souls. To-day, it contains nearly three hundred and fifty millions of people. The total trade of an Empire which now boasts a commerce of six thousand millions was then hardly one-eighth of that amount, though, of course, in comparison with the trade of other nations, such figures most fully deserved "the exultation of every British subject of the time."

With this material progress in the Colonial Empire, there came a complete change in the constitutional framework both of the external dominions and the home country. When freedom and self-government were promoted in Great Britain, they naturally expanded abroad; and when the method of administration changed from the hands of an oligarchy, or a select class, into the hands of the people, the whole principle of Colonial relationship naturally became altered. As the shattered fabric of the old empire in America was slowly replaced by the new and greater structure now embraced in Canada, Australia, and South Africa, it became a settled, and apparently unchangeable, principle in the minds of British statesmen that the mistake made in the case of the United States should never be repeated; that the most absolute liberty should be given the Colonies in every direction; that their destinies should be proclaimed as being entirely in their own hands; and, finally, that separation ought not to be looked upon as an abnormal and dangerous possibility, but as a natural and beneficial probability.

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* Colquhoun's "Wealth and Resources of the British Empire," 1814.

It took time for this latter theory to develop, and, when it did assume practical power in the councils of England, it was chiefly as a product of the first flush of success and wealth following upon free trade and the evolution of machinery; the discovery of Australian gold and the utilization of steam in railroads and ships. In those days of bounding prosperity, what did the Colonies matter? But, as times changed somewhat, and the despised Colonial possessions showed great national and commercial possibilities, opinion again veered round, and the Manchester school of Imperial negation was replaced by the more patriotic principle and aspiration of Imperial unity and fraternity.

In both these developments Mr. Gladstone took part. He started in public life as a believer in the logical probability of eventual separation, but as an opponent of any action which might promote that result. He came, to a certain extent, under the influence of the surrounding indifference to the Colonies in middle life, and believed that the interests of England centred mainly in England herself. In later years he favoured the freest play to Colonial development, the fullest opportunity for self-government and self-support, but at the same time hoped sincerely for a maintenance of the union which was then so clearly becoming beneficial to all concerned.

Simultaneously with this progress and change in the Colonial relationship came the revolution in methods of government at home. Mr. Gladstone in his own person embodied this sweeping change. When he entered political life, the Whigs or aristocratic Liberals were in power. They had come in upon the wave of reform which, at the same time, carried the Tories into retirement; and during many subsequent years they kept in office, partly because of their past reputation, partly as a result of the free trade movement and the consequent disruption of party affiliations. During Lord Palmerston's period of power they were practically supreme, but with his death came the days of further reform, and the dominance of the middle classes.

It was here that Mr. Gladstone obtained his place and influence. This particular section of the English community is greatly interested in trade and commerce; is always ambitious for national improvement or individual change, and betterment of personal conditions; is peculiarly susceptible to the glamour of oratory and the possible benefits of legislation; is opposed to political convulsions, and therefore is not Radical in belief, but dislikes an active or enterprising foreign policy, and is therefore naturally inclined to be Liberal in politics. It was this great class which put Mr. Gladstone in power during the elections of 1868; which dethroned Lord Beaconsfield for a policy containing too much brilliance and imagination for their plain and simple tastes; which, in turn, defeated Irish Home Rule as being too adventurous and daring.

But after passing from the aristocracy to the middle classes power has now practically lodged in the hands of the people. The electorate has been slowly broadened down until the workingman—the artisan and the labourer—has been admitted within its once sacred precincts. The legislation of Mr. Gladstone's last Ministry settled this fact. But, long before that occurred, the development of the platform had proclaimed the coming of the masses. When, in 1866, Mr. Gladstone went down to Liverpool with other Cabinet Ministers, and harangued a great audience in favour of Reform, it was looked upon as the commencement of a new democratic era, and, in fact, did inaugurate the period which found a climax in the Bulgarian and Midlothian campaigns.

In these later days debate in Parliament has, therefore, been superseded by platform oratory, and members of the House of Commons have in too many cases degenerated from being the supporters of political parties with certain defined views, into the delegates of constituencies which regard some particular leader as worthy of support in almost any and every political contingency. It has become a duel between Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli, between Lord Rosebery or Lord Salisbury, rather than a battle of measures or of political principles. Walpole once governed the country through Parliament without the cordial support of the people; Chatham had the people with him, but could not control Parliament; Pitt might have the King and the country in his favour, but would still find difficulty with the Commons. But in 1874 the country wanted Disraeli, and it gave him a majority, with which he did almost as he liked. In 1880, the country wanted Gladstone, and his majority was good for pretty nearly all purposes. Yet as the power of the masses has grown, the authority of Parliament and the influence of independent judgment have diminished. When Mr. Gladstone entered the House of Commons, that body was, in the main, paramount. The debater who could control its discussions, the orator who could modify its opinions, the leader whose character or career could influence its legislation, was all-powerful. The people were in the distance, and, except when an election was imminent, did not usually appear as a vitally important factor in Parliamentary affairs. So long as the majority was quiescent, or the members indifferent, Lord Grey or Lord Melbourne could hold office without doing anything. This, in fact, was the case for years.

But the free trade movement effected a great change. Bright and Cobden made the middle classes, which were now coming into a knowledge of what popular government meant, use the power they really possessed. Many of these persons had no votes, and did not have them until 1867, but they had influence and money, and these two things, combined with oratory and real necessity, forced Parliament to act from outside pressure, rather than from individual conviction. Once that had happened, change to complete popular administration was only a question of time. The fate of aristocratic government as such was sealed, though the influence of the aristocracy upon the people was probably increased rather than diminished. But where it had once administered affairs by favour of a more or less aristocratic legislature, it had now to do it through popular favour and the will of the people.

While these general developments were taking place, parties and leaders had gone through all kinds of changes. Earl Grey presided over the country through and immediately after the passage of the Reform Bill. His Government lived upon the memory of that one achievement, as did the succeeding Whig Ministry of Lord Melbourne. With the exception of a brief Tory interval, the latter Prime Minister smiled and sauntered through the affairs of State until the revival of Toryism in 1841, and the second administration of Sir Robert Peel. But Free Trade then came to the front; shattered the Tory party; developed Disraeli; and afforded a basis for the new Conservatism, which, after the death of Peel in 1850, gradually grew from the ranks of the Protectionist Tories who would not follow Free Trade, and who did ultimately follow the Earl of Derby and Mr. Disraeli. For six years, from 1846, Lord John Russell and the Whigs once more held sway, and did nothing in particular. Mr. Gladstone and the Peelites constituted during these years the Free Trade wing of the Conservative party, while the Protectionist element was under the nominal leadership of Lord George Bentinck, and the brilliant "coaching" of Mr. Disraeli. In 1852, this latter wing of the party had a brief experience of office under Lord Derby, and then followed three years of Coalition government, when the Peelites joined the Whigs under Lord Aberdeen as Premier.

Lord Palmerston, who was nominally a Whig, but really a Conservative in thought, and speech, and policy, alternated in power during the next thirteen years with the Earl of Derby, who was a Tory in every fibre and instinct of his being. There was a brief exception when, upon Palmerston's death, Lord Russell held sway for a few fleeting months, and was, with Mr. Gladstone, defeated upon the Franchise question in 1866. Then came Disraeli for a short season, and finally, in 1868, the merging of parties into the modern designation of Liberal and Conservative. The one now became plastic material in the hands of Mr. Gladstone, the other had been already moulded into shape and form by Mr. Disraeli.

During all these political fluctuations and changes, the general condition of the people had been steadily improving. Slavery was abolished, and wherever the British flag floated a condition of bondage became impossible. The disgraceful Criminal Code was reformed in the direction of mercy and discrimination between great crimes and small offences. The abuses of the Poor Law were gradually done away with, and the condition of workhouses and public institutions improved. Employers were made in some measure responsible for accidents to the lives or limbs of their servants when the injuries were obtained in their service. The long-continued labours of Lord Ashley (better known as the Earl of Shaftesbury) were rewarded by great reforms eventually obtained in the management of mines and factories, the hours and surroundings of the workpeople, the condition of women and children. Wholesale smuggling was done away with by the modifications in the fiscal system ; the injustice suffered from the old-fashioned Game Laws was ameliorated ; the postal system was revolutionized ; and education was simplified, and made the great national factor in the improvement of the people.

Through the school and the press intelligence has been promoted, information spread broadcast throughout the land, and every subject of the State, no matter how humble his position, has become the equal of the Peer in his possibilities of self-improvement and his opportunities for acquiring knowledge. When the century was half through its memorable course, science came to the aid of legislation, and helped to provide safety and light for the miner, cheapness in production for the manufacturer, facility in reaping the riches of nature for the farmer, new avenues of work for the artisan, marvellous means of locomotion for the traveller, new and beneficial methods of transportation for the trader.

Partly because of this general development, and partly because of the absence of similar progress in other countries, English commerce took enormous strides in advance of what it ever had been, or of what might at one time have been thought fit subject even for dreams and visions. Trade increased by leaps and bounds, and the manufacturers coined wealth, until at last the inevitable change came, and foreign nations took steps to check this commercial supremacy through fiscal legislation of their own. Meantime, religious inequalities had been steadily removed or remedied. The Church was still the State Establishment, but gradually the unequal treatment of Churchmen and Dissenters, under a law which should have recognized all as equal, was done away with ; the laws of marriage were reformed ; the restrictions upon burials and other matters connected with the every day religious life of the people were remedied or bettered.

The powers of the landlord have also been limited ; the right of the farmer in his holdings and investments has been recognized ; the extravagant expenses of Parliamentary contests have been controlled ; the rights of women in certain public duties and property privileges admitted. With the Corn Laws had gone the stringent Navigation Laws, and free imports went hand in hand with free ships and free commerce, so far as one-sided legislation could make them free. The change of shipbuilding, from wood to iron, multiplied opportunities for improvement in navigation and the general condition of the navy. Abuses in the public service were reformed out of sight, and though they cannot ever be entirely abolished in any country, they have been minimized in extent and influence. Officers no longer purchase their promotion in the army, any more than Peers can now control at their will seats in the national House of Commons.

Meanwhile the morals of the whole community have improved. The Sovereign has set an example which society has not been slow to follow. The splendid character and admirable career of the Prince Consort did a service to the State which has been far-reaching and invaluable in its results. The Court has vied with the Church in setting an example of high aims and strenuous exertion before the public of the United Kingdom. Sports of a lowering and degrading nature, which in the early days of the century held high place in the catalogue of amusements, have been reduced from a national level to one of concealment and more or less shame. Drunkenness, from a fashionable necessity and a popular desire, has decreased into a question of the workingman's glass of beer, or vanished into the slums of the great cities. Roughness and brutality, although still too common, is being steadily environed by law and popular disapprobation.

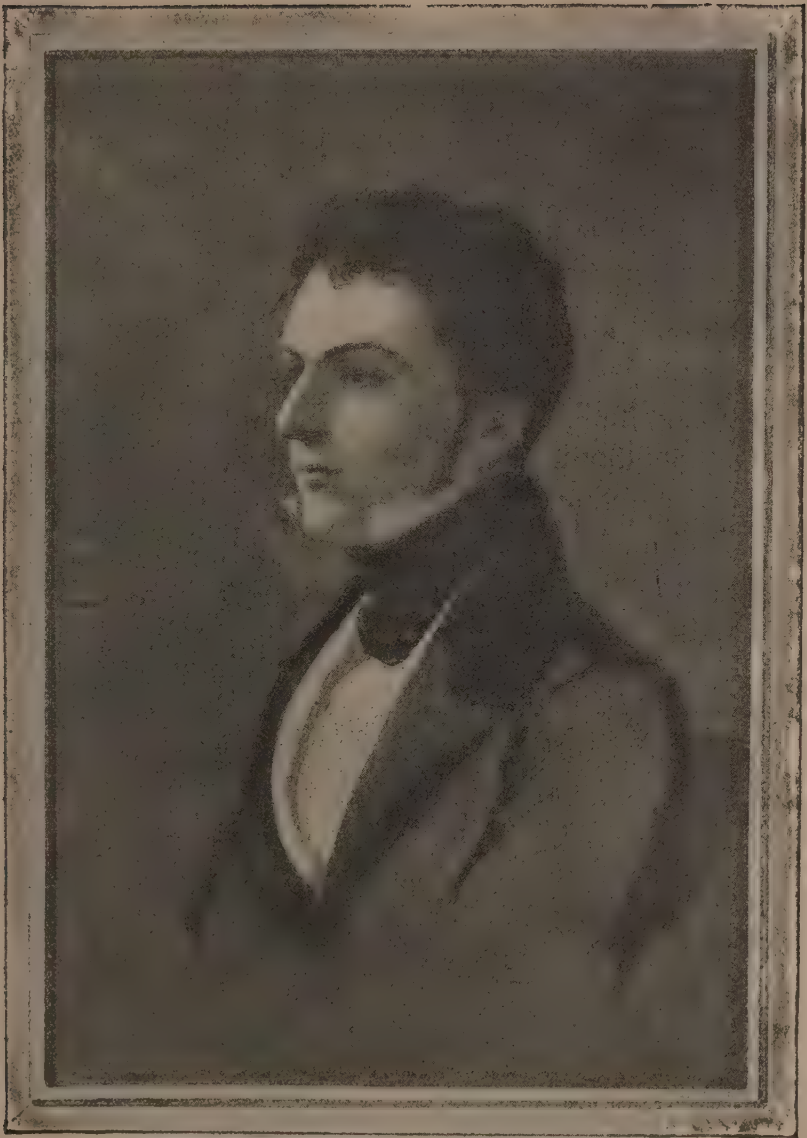
In religious matters, the rivalry of Church and Dissent has resulted in promoting the enthusiasm and good work of each. Since the Tractarian wave of the "Forties," the sentiment and work of the Established Church has been revolutionized, and its labours multiplied almost beyond the recognition of those who brought about that great Catholic revival. The parishes of England have changed as though swept by some powerful unseen influence, and with that change has come strength for the Church, development in the foreign mission field, expansion of religious influence, growth of Christian liberality.

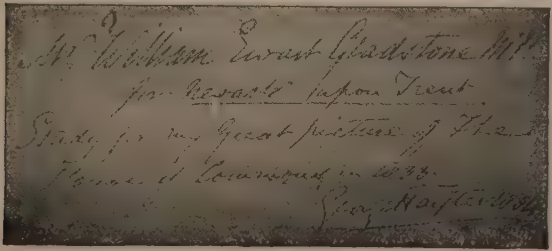
Over Ireland a great and vital change has come. Not so much in the condition of the people, though there it has been considerable, as in the influence which they wield. In the beginning of the century the little isle was hardly a national factor of importance. At its close, Ireland is the mistress of British politics, and the chief influence in the destiny of English Liberalism. During the period that lies between, whether for good or ill, its institutions have been completely altered, its land laws revolutionized, its Established Church abolished, its landlords driven into retirement or exile, its representation increased, its people alternately coerced and conciliated.

Through all these events in the United Kingdom, Mr. Gladstone has passed in varied political action. Some of the reforms he has hindered, some he has opposed, others he has brought about. Some of these marvellous changes he has had nothing to do with, others have come to him as a heritage of fortune, and still others are in a stage where the benefit is questionable. Some of the political changes have brought him the utmost intensity of bitter dislike; the strongest marks of enthusiastic support. But to a man who has seen so much of change; who has felt the shadows and sunshine of over sixty years of public life; who has noted a dozen Prime Ministers come and go and pass into history; who has himself viewed politics from so many and varied standpoints; change must appear to be the absolutely natural order of national existence.

And whatever place may be assigned to Mr. Gladstone in the pantheon of the ages, there can be no doubt as to his influence upon the century in which he has lived, or concerning the greatness and beneficence of that period to which Queen Victoria has given the stamp of her character and her name.

> "Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
> Let the great world spin for ever, down the ringing grooves of change.
> Thro' the shadows of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
> Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."





Mr William Ewart Gladstone M.P.
for Newark upon Trent.
Study for my Great picture of The
House of Commons in 1833.
Geo. Hayter 1834

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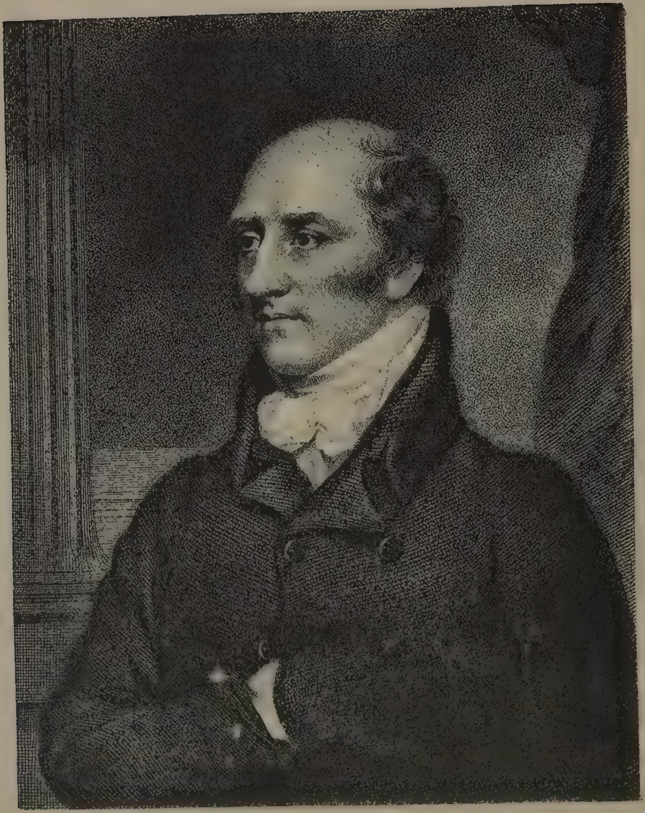
MR. GLADSTONE IN 1833.



RIGHT HON. GEORGE CANNING, M.P.

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1827.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY YEARS IN A GREAT LIFE.

IT is not often in history that we find the same year giving birth to the leading scientist, the greatest poet, and the most prominent public man of a century. But, in 1809, Charles Darwin, Alfred Tennyson, and William Ewart Gladstone were born into a world which the one was to confuse, the other charm, and the third change. Of the three, Mr. Gladstone has exerted the widest influence and won the greatest name. And upon no one in English history has the environment of early life, the teachings and opinions of parents, the assistance and admiration of youthful friends, had a greater effect. Those influences were not in many respects permanent, but in the moulding of his character and the development of certain prominent tendencies of thought and feeling they were unmistakably powerful.

Mr. Gladstone has always been proud of his Scotch descent. "I am not slow to claim the name of Scotchman," he said, during a speech in 1890, "and, even if I were, there is the fact staring me in the face that not a drop of blood runs in my veins except what is derived from a Scotch ancestry." The family was a very old one, though in the passage of the centuries it had gradually changed from a position of landed gentility to one of commercial exertion. The name of Gladstanes or Gledstanes has been traced in Scotch annals back to the reign of Edward I., and there is every evidence of its having had a place in Scandinavian history, under the form of Gladsten. One representative of the family fought in Border warfare with an ancestor of the Dukes of Buccleuch, and no doubt shared in the time-honoured and simple plan:

"That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

Still another fought and fell on the side of the Covenanters in the perilous days of Charles I. For some time estates were held near Hawick by feudal tenure from the far-famed Douglas family, but gradually these possessions were parted with. Then followed the loss of the estates of Arthurshiel and Gladstanes, in Clydesdale, until, towards the close of the seventeenth century, William Gladstanes retired to the old town of Biggar and went into business as a malster. His son, Thomas Gladstones—as the name had now become—early in life, settled in Leith, and in time made a comfortable livelihood, first as a corn and flour merchant, and finally as a shipowner. He died in 1809, only seven months before the birth of the grandson who was to make the name so famous. His son, John Gladstone, was the most remarkable of sixteen children. Born in 1764, he lived to become one of the wealthiest citizens of Liverpool, a member of Parliament, a friend of Canning, and a baronet of the United Kingdom.

He could fairly claim to be a self-made man. His education does not seem to have been very good, and the taunts of political enemies in later years would indicate that he never entirely overcame the obstacle thus raised. His stay at school being very short, he entered his father's business at an early age, and when about twenty-one was sent to Liverpool to sell a cargo of grain which had arrived at that port. He had already made sundry voyages to the Baltic and to America with large trade commissions. But upon this occasion he decided to settle in Liverpool, and took advantage of an opening to join the firm of Corrie, Bradshaw & Co. An incident is related of the period immediately following, which not only illustrates the keen business ability of the young man, but indicates the difficulties of trade in those stormy days.

The utter failure of the European corn crops in one of the closing years of the century was regarded by Mr. Corrie as an opportunity for doing a capital piece of business. With the enterprise characteristic of British merchants, he sent Mr. Gladstone to the United States to buy corn, and followed this up by despatching twenty-four vessels, at an enormous cost, to convey the precious product home. But when America was reached Gladstone found that a scarcity existed there, and that no corn was to be had. This apparently meant ruin to the firm of Corrie & Co., and Liverpool was stirred with speculation regarding its shattered fortunes. John Gladstone, however, was equal to the emergency. The ships must not return empty. He made a thorough examination of the American markets, and, by force of sleepless energy, stocked his vessels with goods which seemed likely to command a sale in Liverpool. The result was satisfactory, the firm was saved, and the name of Gladstone became famed in English business circles for push and ability.

Naturally, too, the young merchant became a partner in the concern, and for sixteen years Corrie, Gladstone & Bradshaw carried on a large business in Liverpool. At the end of this period the arrangement terminated, and John Gladstone was joined in a new firm by his brother Robert. The other surviving members of the family also gradually drifted from Leith to Liverpool. In 1800, Mr. Gladstone married for the second time. His wife was Ann Robertson, of Dingwall, and a member of a Scotch family much more distinguished than that of the Gladstones. Its lineage was traceable to Duncan, King of Scotland, to Henry III. of England, and to King Robert the Bruce. But in later days much of this old-time grandeur had disappeared, and Miss Robertson's father was quite proud and satisfied to be Provost of Dingwall for a number of years at the end of the eighteenth century.

Of this lady, who became the mother of England's famous Premier, many memories remain. And they all testify to her benevolence and accomplishments. She was the dearest friend of Sir Roderick Murchison's mother, and one of the great scientist's earliest recollections were of her. She was modestly conspicuous in more than one good cause in Liverpool, and has been described as a woman "of very great accomplishments, of fascinating manners, of commanding presence and high intellect, one to grace any home and endear any heart." More than this, she was the good mother of an excellent family, and of one great son, who showed in his after life, and amid all the ups and downs of national struggle, the force and value of a noble home training. Five children of this union lived to old age, and became variously known. Thomas, born in 1804, and John Neilson, born in 1807, were in after years members of Parliament. Robertson, born in 1805, became President of the Financial Reform Association. William Ewart Gladstone, the youngest of all, first saw the light of day at 62 Rodney Street, Liverpool, on December the 29th, 1809. He was christened in honour of one of his father's personal and political friends, who had come to Liverpool in early days like John Gladstone himself, and who, like him, had conquered difficulties and won success. His son, also William Ewart, was afterwards Liberal M.P. for his native city. There were two daughters in the Gladstone family, one who died young, and Helen Jane, who was converted to the Roman Catholic faith during the great movement towards Rome in the early "Forties," and who died during 1880 in a convent at Cologne.

Meantime, John Gladstone—he had in early life dropped the last letter from his name—was steadily strengthening his position, and showing a character which is of great importance in any estimate of the forces which moulded his son's early life and far more remarkable career. It was as a Presbyterian and a Whig that Liverpool first knew him. It was an Episcopalian and a Tory who was afterwards honoured with the confidence of statesmen and the regard of his fellow-citizens. Politically, and for sixteen years following the commencement of the war with France in 1792, he seems to have remained a moderate Whig, until the action of his party in opposing the continuance of that vital conflict made him drift into the arms of the Tories. His friendship and admiration for George Canning finally settled the question. Like every party change, this was often afterwards thrown in his teeth, one well-known verse reading:

"John Gladstone was as fine a man
As ever graced commercial story,
Till all at once he changed his plan,
And from a Whig became a Tory.
And now he meets his friends with pride,
Yet tells them but a wretched story;
He says not why he changed his side,
He *was* a Whig—he's now a Tory."

During the elections of 1812, the two former members for Liverpool, General Gascoyne and General Tarleton, were quite willing to stand again, but John Gladstone, and other seceding Whigs, wanted a statesman worthy of so important a constituency, and they accordingly turned to Canning Mr. Gladstone was so eager in the matter that he offered to become personally responsible for the amount of the election expenses, whatever they might be. At an open-air meeting he delivered an address which, after dealing with the commercial condition of the country, and the unfortunate troubles with the aggressive element in the United States, described the candidate's character and career in the most glowing terms. For a time it had been Mr. Gladstone's intention to also support Henry Brougham—afterwards the famous Chancellor—but that erratic though brilliant individual decided to throw in his lot with Thomas Creevey, the advanced Radical candidate, and thus made it necessary for the merchant and his friends to support General Gascoyne, a Tory of the Tories.

In the memorable contest which followed, Canning remained the guest of Mr. Gladstone, and thus laid the foundation of an important friendship, and of a remarkable influence over the mind of the child who was destined to be his successor, after many long years, in the Premiership of a great Empire. This Liverpool contest was probably the most exciting in a fiercely-fought general election.

Eccentric eloquence in the person of Brougham, and pronounced Radicalism in the person of Creevey, were pitted against the great reputation of Canning, and the vigorous Toryism of Gascoyne. In the end the two latter candidates won, and Lord Brougham, in his Memoirs, significantly remarks that "two or three men were killed, but the town was quiet." After the hot and bitter fight was over, the victors were chaired, placed at the head of a long and enthusiastic procession, and carried to Mr. Gladstone's house, from the balcony of which Mr. Canning delivered an address to the crowd.

From this time forward John Gladstone was a devoted follower and admirer of Mr. Canning, and in August, 1822, presided at a dinner given to that statesman by the Liverpool Canning Club, upon the occasion of his appointment as Governor-General of India. A sudden change in the composition of the Ministry, however, prevented his departure, and the brilliant orator remained at home, and became, in 1827, Prime Minister for the brief period which ended in his premature death. That he should have died in the same house, in the same room, and at the same early age as Charles Fox, was a sorrowful coincidence in the careers of two men of equal abilities, and somewhat similar misfortunes, though of entirely different personal characteristics.

Canning's foreign policy was very different from that of his predecessor, Lord Castlereagh. Both were Conservative ministers, but the one believed in "the Holy Alliance" and the divine right of great powers; the other loved liberty, and preferred that England should try to guard the independence of the small powers of Europe. The former, at the Congress of Vienna, had allowed Geneva to be given to Sardinia; Venice to be handed over to Austria; Saxony to be partitioned in favour of Prussia; Poland to be allotted to Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Pitt had struggled for the deliverance of Europe; Castlereagh helped to surrender the liberties of some of its minor states. Canning, on the other hand, tried to save Spain; repudiated "the Holy Alliance" of the three great European powers; recognized and helped the independence of the South American states; aided Greece against Turkey; defended the independence of Portugal. It was this policy, in addition to the charming personality of the man, which won over John Gladstone and fascinated the mind of his youthful son.

So much for one of the influences which affected and surrounded the future statesman. Another was that of slavery. The shadow of this dreadful custom darkened the career of the father, and might have ruined that of the son. In 1819, Mr. John Gladstone had been elected to Parliament for Lancaster, a borough noted for its corruption—even down to the time of its disfranchisement by Disraeli in 1867. Upon this occasion, the Liverpool Tories had contributed $30,000 towards his election expenses—certainly an ample sum for a small constituency. Two years later he was elected for Woodstock, which he represented until 1826, and in the succeeding year sat for Berwick. It was in 1823 that Mr. Gladstone's slave estates in Demerara caused a commotion in England, which became historic in its results, but has always been somewhat shrouded in mystery as to its origin.

In that year a distinct movement began to make headway in Parliament against slavery in general. It was felt that the mere abolition of the trade in slaves was not sufficient, and that more active and practical steps should be taken. Accordingly, Thomas Fowell Buxton, father of the present Governor of Victoria, Australia, moved in the House that the state of slavery was repugnant to Christianity and the British Constitution, and should be gradually abolished. Mr. Canning proposed a compromise, looking to a preparation for freedom by gradual amelioration of the slaves' condition. This was accepted by the House. But shortly afterwards came the news of a terrible occurrence in Demerara. An abortive negro uprising had taken place, commencing on Mr. Gladstone's plantation, "Success." Nothing much had resulted, and it was quickly suppressed. The planters, however, seemed to have gone mad with fear, and Governor Murray issued a proclamation imposing martial law. This actually remained in force for over five months, during which some fifty negroes were hanged, others were shot, in the bush where they had tried to conceal themselves, while many more were torn to pieces by the lash.

But what stirred up public opinion in England more especially was the fate of a missionary named Smith. He had unfortunately kept a diary in which he recorded his sympathy with the slaves under their hard labour and frequent endurance of the whip. One extract is interesting in this connection: "The negroes of 'Success' have complained to me lately of excessive labour and very severe treatment. I told one of their overseers that I thought they would work their people to death." No one, of course, can blame Mr. John Gladstone for this. It was the natural result of a miserable system, which placed supreme power over large estates in a distant island in the hands of men who might be all that was good, or might, on the other hand, be everything that was bad. When, therefore, the troubles came, Mr. Smith was at once arrested. He was promptly tried by a court-martial, which appears to have shown neither law, nor justice, nor fair play, and was condemned to death upon perjured evidence. While the sentence was formally sent to England for confirmation, the young missionary was flung into a loathsome dungeon, in which he soon died. The result of the whole affair was an agitation which ended, ten years later, in the total abolition of slavery.

Mr. Gladstone at once wrote to the Liverpool papers defending the management of his estates, the right of slave-owners to their property, and the general condition of the West Indian slave. He denounced the missionary societies and urged that the negroes should receive religious instruction from "pure sources," which he defined as being "clergymen of the Established Churches." Strange to say, the prolonged debates which took place in Parliament upon these troubles do not touch the name or fame of John Gladstone. With wonderful scrupulousness, his political foes and friends alike avoided mention of his Demerarian estates, and Hansard may be searched in vain for allusion to the fact that the insurrection began upon his property. In later years his course and the administration of his estates were defended by his son, but at this time Mr. Gladstone remained discreetly silent, so far as the House was concerned. None the less, Smith's "martyrdom" in Demerara deserves to rank with that of John Brown in Virginia.

These events, however, had apparently little effect upon Mr. Gladstone's position in Liverpool. Though he never contested a seat for Parliament in the city of his adoption, there could be no doubt of his great popularity there. And this in spite of more than one serious political blunder. The large amount subscribed for him in 1818 indicated his strong popular position, and a handsome testimonial presented him in 1824 further proved it. His advice was constantly asked in connection with commercial matters by the powers of the day, and although he left Parliament in 1827 his influence continued to be felt. In the latter year, it was generally believed that Canning intended to raise him to the peerage, and there is little doubt that this would have been the case had that statesman lived. As it was, Sir Robert Peel recommended him for a baronetcy in 1845. Six years afterwards he died at the patriarchal age of 87.

It will be seen from this sketch that Sir John Gladstone was, in many respects, a remarkable man. His commercial ability was very great; his Toryism in middle and later life was equally pronounced; his character made him strongly felt in Liverpool and in his home. He had a penetrating glance, strongly marked features, and a firm, resolute mouth. He has been described by his son in the following words:

> "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated; he was full of bodily and mental vigour; he could not understand or tolerate those who, perceiving an object to be good, did not at once and actively pursue it; and with all this energy he joined a corresponding warmth and, so to speak, eagerness of affection, a keen appreciation of humour, in which he found a rest, and an indescribable frankness and simplicity of character, which, crowning his other qualities, made him, I think (and I strive to think impartially), nearly or quite the most interesting old man I have ever known."

It will therefore be easily understood that not the least important feature of William Gladstone's early days was the influence upon his intelligent and receptive nature of the experienced perception of such a father. Sir John Gladstone's masterful will combined with his wife's sweetness and goodness to guard their children from the dangers of surrounding wealth; to instruct them in its advantages; and train them in a knowledge of the value of money, the folly of extravagance and excess, the importance of work, of concentration, and of ambition. The family environment from the children's earliest years was one of intelligence and wealth. In the immediate vicinity of their large, comfortable home in Rodney Street, a number of more or less eminent persons had been born, including Roscoe, the author and philanthropist, Bishop Bickersteth, Mrs. Hemans, and Dr. James Martineau.

William Gladstone's earliest remembrance is that of standing beside his nurse whilst Canning addressed the cheering crowds from the window of his home. The next recollection was that of being taken to see Hannah More by his mother, and he still remembers the brilliant illumination of his father's house in 1813 over the defeat of Napoleon at Leipsic. A year later he visited Edinburgh, and heard the guns roar in honour of what was thought to be the end of the world's greatest military struggle. And about this period he spent some time with friends in Wales. Meantime, his father had moved from the heart of the city to a sort of country place, at the mouth of the Mersey. Here he built a handsome house, which was called after Lord Seaforth, the head of the Mackenzie family, to which Mrs. Gladstone belonged. Here also he erected a church, which not only marked a liberality already distinguished by one erected in Liverpool itself, but denoted in its Anglican character the final severance of its founder from the Presbyterian faith and denomination.

It must have been a delightful place for a boy. Speaking to his fellow-citizens at Liverpool, when he was himself over eighty years of age, Mr. Gladstone declared that: "From my father's windows at Seaforth, I used, as a small boy, to look southward along the shore to this town, even then becoming a large town in the country. I remember well that it was crowned by not so much cloud as a film of silver grey smoke, such as you may now see surmounting the fabrics of some town of ten or twenty thousand where the steam-engine has as yet scarcely found a place. . . . Four miles of the most beautiful sand that I ever knew offered to the aspirations of the youthful rider the most delightful method of finding access to Liverpool." Whether a fondness for this mild dissipation had any effect upon the boy's early progress at school is not known, but there is little doubt that it was not altogether promising.

His tutor was the Rev. William Rawson, incumbent of the Seaforth Church, and other pupils of that time, or in close succession, were Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the famous Dean of Westminster in later days, and Richard Assheton Cross, three times Secretary of State, and now Viscount Cross. Neither Stanley nor Gladstone were any good at arithmetic. Mr. Rawson seems to have done his best, but many years afterwards he declared, with still vivid memories of that time of trouble, that Arthur Stanley was the stupidest boy at figures that ever came under his care save only one—William Gladstone—who was yet more hopeless, and was unable to grasp even simple addition and multiplication. It is therefore interesting to think, and well to remember by those having to deal with children, that this boy, so dull at figures, afterwards became the most brilliant financier in English history—able to handle vast problems of national arithmetic in a manner little less than marvellous to the ordinary observer.

But he seems to have done fairly well in classics, and the home influence with which the lad was environed would have benefited one whose faculties were very dull instead of being only dormant. There were constant discussions going on in the family upon every conceivable subject. It seems as if the Scotch characteristic of love for disquisition and intricate distinction had been abnormally developed amongst them. Aside from those necessary matters in which obedience was required, few things were allowed to pass between father and sons as a matter of course. They must be carefully argued out and discussed, even to a degree verifying the old distich:

"Who could distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and southwest side."

A succession of these controversies on great and little subjects—conducted with good humour and determined logic—formed a sort of conversational staple. Some one has said that the family would debate as to whether the trout should be boiled or broiled; whether a window ought to be opened or not; whether the next day was likely to be fine or wet. It must have been very curious to a stranger, because of the evident care which all the disputants took to advance no proposition, even as to the prospect of rain, without thought and consideration. If the observer could have foreseen the day when one of the boys, as Prime Minister of England, would be able to exercise, in a moment of national danger and political difficulty, his marvellous ingenuity in proving that to be hemmed in is not the same as being surrounded, he would have thought it still more curious.

None the less, this sort of intellectual equality between the father and sons must have been invaluable to the latter. Indeed, William Gladstone's whole career proves the assistance which this early experience in debate, discussion, and thoughtfulness really was to him. Although Sir John was not a man of culture, in the ordinary sense of the word, he had mixed with men of mark, of intellect, and of education, during a long and fruitful life. His practical knowledge was, therefore, very great, and it is not difficult to see how easily the impressionable mind of a child would benefit by much of what he heard, and received the fullest explanation of, in their numerous discussions. No doubt, too, it was from the overflowing enthusiasm of his father's admiration for Canning that the son derived those lessons in liberty which afterwards took effect in Italy, Greece, and other countries.

The family was a very religious one. Mrs. Gladstone had been bred in the Scotch Episcopal communion, but was a sincere Christian, rather than a bigoted believer in any particular denomination. She had frequently attended a Dissenting chapel when living in the city, partly because it was near their house, and partly because the preacher was noted for his eloquence and piety. When her husband changed from the Presbyterianism of his early days, built a church in the vicinity of Rodney Street, and finally became an enthusiastic High Churchman, Mrs. Gladstone was able to follow him in all earnestness and good works. An incident is told by Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P., in a biography of Sir James Picton, of Liverpool, illustrative of the piety in which the family appears to have been brought up.

Upon one occasion it seems that Mr. Henry Pooley (Sir J. Picton's father-in-law) went to do some work at the house of Mr. John Gladstone. "One of the children, Master William by name, became interested, and stood watching him. After a while the child looked up at him with eager eyes, and said: 'Mr. Pooley, do you love Jesus?' The delight of the old Methodist workingman may be imagined." And the infant evangelist lived to be famous for his religious convictions, and to be as fervent a believer in the Church of England as was his father during all the later years of a long life.

But the time was now coming for William Gladstone to enter upon his career, to show what might be the real capabilities of the boyish mind, and to prepare for the future which lay before him. In September, 1821, at the age of twelve, he was sent to Eton. Liverpool had, through his father, given the boy every advantage of commercial environment and business ability. Eton was now to give him a classical education, and Oxford to develop the political and moral lessons of home life into strong, and, in some cases, lasting convictions.

CHAPTER III.

AT ETON AND OXFORD.

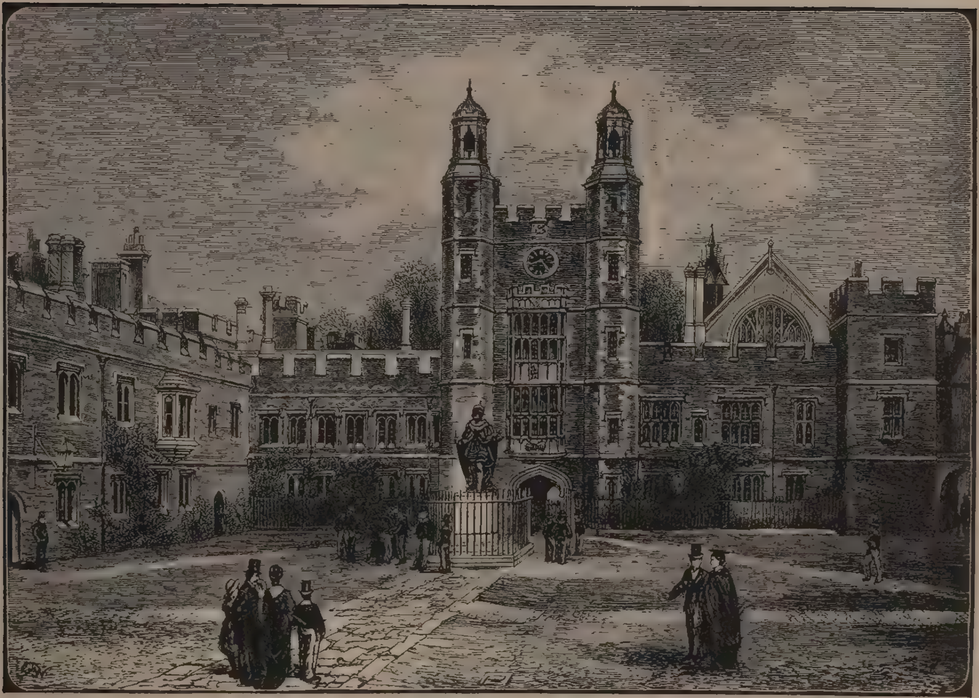
THE great schools of England are famous for the men they have produced. Amongst them, Eton is, perhaps, the most renowned, and in this place the affectionate reminiscences of many leaders in the British world have helped to keep it. The storms of four hundred years have passed over its lofty towers, and the sunshine of centuries has permeated the beautiful glades and woodland which lend such charms to the boyish memories of the past. Within and without its gray stone walls many of the premiers and statesmen of England have studied their tasks and played their games, and then passed into the history of their country. Here, Sir Robert Walpole received his early education; here, the Earl of Chatham may have practised some of that eloquence which still rings down through the ages; here, Charles James Fox commenced his career of erratic brilliance;

here studied Lord North, the alienator of America, and the Earl of Durham, whose advice saved Canada from a possibly similar course; here George Canning and Earl Grey, Viscount Melbourne and the fourteenth Earl of Derby, came to begin careers of national importance; here the Duke of Wellington received his early training; here Shelley spent the boyhood days in a life of sorrowful splendour.

To it Mr. Gladstone and the Earl of Rosebery have looked back with affection and respect. Yet, in the days when William Ewart Gladstone entered Eton, there was much in its system of education that now appears deplorable, much in the management of the school which now seems blameworthy, much in the general discipline which is worthy of the very strongest censure. There was but little time devoted to regular study, and the means adopted for teaching classics were narrow and unsatisfactory. Perhaps eleven hours a week would cover the whole period given to school instruction. The subjects taught comprised a little ancient and modern geography, part of a work on the Thirty-nine Articles, a little Divinity through construing the Greek Testament, together with a certain quantity of Latin and Greek. Mathematics, physics, or moral science were not considered necessary.

But the great difficulty was the lack of proper supervision over the boys —the apparent inability to limit their power when united, or check customs far from good, which may have become traditional. Hence the "fagging" system. This right, or power, or privilege—it was a combination of the three—gave to the boys of the sixth and fifth forms the right of command, and all below were compelled to obey the orders given. Amongst five or six hundred boys it produced considerable cruelty, and the power was at times, and as a matter of course, greatly abused. Without the code of honour that largely prevailed, and the loyalty to certain good traditions and boyish principles which marked the system, it would have quickly become intolerable, and resulted in the establishment of a species of slavery in the lower forms, and despotism in the upper, with all the inevitably evil consequences upon individual character. As it was, the most superficial observer would find more fagging and flogging, more injustice and tyranny, than was at all desirable.

The love of sport and the practice of every kind of outdoor amusement was the side of Etonian life which produced some of the better results. It made the boys strong, and able to endure the hardships of fagging and the effects of many and severe floggings. It built up their systems, and, in cases of real ability or genuine ambition, prepared them physically for the serious studies of Oxford or Cambridge. Lord Morley, when examined at one time before a Public Schools Commission, was asked whether the boys used to look down upon a schoolmate for being industrious in his studies. His reply was: "Not if he could do something else well." This, of course, meant that if he were



ETON COLLEGE.

CHRISTCHURCH COLLEGE, OXFORD.

good at cricket, or rowing, or boxing, or running, he would be pardoned for being good at work. And in this connection there can be as little doubt of the many "fine fellows with a manly tone" whom Eton has produced as of the additional fact that many of the best men of this and other centuries have come from that famous school.

William Gladstone, however, was not the boy to succumb to the disadvantages of the school, and he was certainly fitted by nature to make use of all that was good and honourable and true in its system, or amongst the youths who quickly gathered around him. He was fortunate also in having his two elder brothers, Thomas and Robertson, already there, and in becoming the former's fag. This, no doubt, saved him much unpleasantness, and gave him more time for the studies and literary work to which he was soon devoted. And through all his school life he was greatly helped by a happy disposition and by generous impulses, which prevented him from becoming a prig, or a precocious and unpleasant critic.

Starting in the fourth form, as he was enabled to do, was in itself an advantage, and he speedily made friends with many of the boys who were foremost in the school, and who afterwards became foremost in the annals of their time. The list of his schoolfellows is a most notable one. In the sixth form, according to the records of 1823, were Spencer Walpole, afterwards Home Secretary, and John Mitford, known to history as the Lord Redesdale, who, for so many years, was Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords. In the upper division of the fifth were Sir Stephen Glynne, Baronet, of Hawarden Castle, and brother of young Gladstone's future wife; George Cornewall Lewis, the able but short-lived statesman, who afterwards succeeded his schoolmate as Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the Duke of Buccleugh, who was destined to be so bitterly opposed to Mr. Gladstone in his great electoral triumph in Midlothian. In the lower division of the fifth, with William Gladstone, were placed Walter Kerr Hamilton, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury; George Augustus Selwyn, who was destined to be, in succession, Bishop of New Zealand and Lichfield; Arthur Henry Hallam, son of the historian, and immortalized by "In Memoriam"; Frederic Rogers, first Lord Blachford; John Young, afterwards Lord Lisgar and Governor-General of Canada; Alexander William Kinglake, the historian; and Charles Jasper Selwyn, afterwards Lord Justice of Appeal.

Others who became associated with the school and with young Gladstone at this time were James Bruce, afterwards Earl of Elgin; Charles Canning, afterwards Earl Canning and Governor-General of India; Gerald Wellesley, in other days Dean of Windsor; William Cavendish, the late Duke of Devonshire; James Milnes-Gaskell, M.P.; Lord Lincoln, afterwards Duke of Newcastle; Algernon Percy, sixth Duke of Northumberland; and Lord Arthur

Hervey, whom Mr. Gladstone was destined to many years later nominate to the See of Bath and Wells, and who was the sole survivor in public life of that brilliant band of Eton boys when the Prime Minister of England laid down the mantle of power some seventy years after this time. The tastes of William Gladstone and his pursuits in Eton may be easily guessed. He took little part in cricket, was seldom seen as an oarsman, and contributed little to the annals of school sportsmanship.

He loved long, quiet walks in country lanes, and in the beautiful district surrounding Eton. His companions were usually Hallam, the Selwyns, or Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, the latter of whom has left us many charming glimpses of his friend's conduct and character. With companions like these he would wander for hours, discussing problems, new and old. His political bent was shown in many ways. As in after years, his views were often conflicting. Upon one occasion he declared that all his prejudices and predilections had long been enlisted on the Tory side, and a little later he appeared at a college fete in Greek costume, in order to prove his sympathy with a people struggling to be free. Even then he was trying to harmonize the old with the new, the Toryism of Wellington with that of Canning. It may be doubted whether this mental struggle has ever entirely ceased.

But it was then only beginning, and certainly the mere intellectual exercise of thinking and discussing political principles, apart from the corresponding growth of knowledge, was useful to the boy in a school where study was somewhat at a discount, and the teaching, such as it was, came under the tyrannical supervision of Dr. Keate. Of this man innumerable stories are told, all illustrative of his bad temper and love for the strap. The lack of respect felt for him, with all his severity and pomposity, is shown in the records of his classes, where cock-crowing, whistling, upsetting of forms, and other practical jokes, constituted a sociable method of passing the time. There was no religious teaching in the school to speak of. Sunday services were a farce, at which the boys gathered like a mob, with little order, and no more attention to what was going on than they gave to the head-master's efforts to obtain quietness.

The noblemen, or "nobs," together with the sixth form, occupied stalls in the church, and it was a custom to eat large supplies of raisins and almonds during the service. There was no mathematical master in the school, and consequently young Gladstone did not have much opportunity to prove or disprove the "stupidity" in that connection which had been alleged against him. But the future Chancellor of the Exchequer could well afford to wait, and in after days might have remembered the statement of a master in the Military School of Brienne, that "Napoleon Buonaparte would never make a passable officer because he had such a distaste for mathematics." His tutor, the Rev. Henry Hartopp Knapp, was an excellent scholar, though by no means an exemplary cleric.

He was equally fond of claret and of prize-fighting, and upon one occasion asked how a boy could get seasoned into a man if temptations were kept from him!

The boarding-house occupied by William Gladstone and many others—in later days by Lord Robert Cecil, now Marquess of Salisbury—was also extremely unsatisfactory from a moral point of view. A tavern opposite called "The Christopher" was a constant source of temptation to the youths, and not infrequently the one became a sort of annex to the other. All this was certainly not conducive to study, to self-improvement, or to moral elevation. That young Gladstone and his friends, and so many others, were able to come through the ordeal of this badly managed school, not only uninjured, but preserving a feeling of something like veneration for it, is an evidence of some pervading power and influence in Eton, altogether apart from curriculum, or precept, or example. As already hinted, there appears to have been a force in the traditions of the school and in the code of honour amongst the boys which was a strong power for good. Added to it was the utter contempt for money as such. This had the effecting of preventing the corruption and indulgences which come amongst boys, or men, or women, wherever the display and distinctions and rivalries of wealth are introduced or promoted.

In referring to this many years afterwards—July 6, 1878—Mr. Gladstone spoke of Eton as "the queen of all schools." He then referred to some of the difficulties which he had to face in his boyhood there, and added:

> "I wish to say one thing more. No boy was ever estimated, either more or less, because he had much money to spend. It added nothing to him if he had much; it took nothing from him if he had little. I am afraid it is not quite so now, and that this wish for wealth with which parents most corruptibly, not only indulge, but stimulate their children, exercises a heavy pressure on the intellectual movement of that great foundation."

It is, therefore, clear that an environment which could teach boys to value each other apart from any money they might have as individuals contained much that was noble. And, if we are to estimate a tree by its fruits, there can be no doubt as to the good influence of the school. William Gladstone's companions were the very flower of English boyhood, and, with all deficiencies freely admitted, we can still understand the value of this life amid scenes haunted by illustrious memories; and where, in the very shadow of Windsor, Lord Hatherley tells us, the boys in his day used to sing:

"Come three to one, right sure am I,
If we can't beat them, we will try
To make old England's colours fly."

There are many stories told of young Gladstone in those days. Most of them indicate unusual devotion to study. He worked hard at classics, and spent part of his holidays in mastering mathematics. His Latin and Greek composition was at first rather stiff in style, but he seems to have become imbued with the substance of his authors, and it is said that, when any striking passages in Homer or Virgil or other text-books required translation, he or Lord Arthur Hervey would be called up to edify the class. He seems to have exercised a good moral influence upon others, and to have preserved intact his orderly, conscientious, Christian character. The late Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury once stated that, "At Eton, I was a thoroughly idle boy, but was saved from some worse things by getting to know Gladstone." Memories are still vivid of his action during an election dinner at "The Christopher," in refusing to drink a coarse toast which had become a sort of annual custom. He quietly turned his glass upside down, and declined to join the others. Upon another occasion he appears as the champion of some miserable pigs, which the boys proposed to torture in a thoroughly boyish fashion, and against which he protested by offering to write his opinion "in good round hand upon their faces."

This little incident proves that there was nothing "namby-pamby" in his goodness of conduct, and that he could enjoy himself as well as any other boy, and in much the same way. We find this also shown by an extract from a letter by Charles Canning in 1827, in which he says:

> "Handley, Gladstone, Mr. Bruce, Lord Bruce, Hodgson, and myself set up a Salt Hill Club at the end of the half. We met every whole holiday, or half, as was convenient, after twelve, and went up to Salt Hill to bully the fat waiter, eat toasted cheese, and drink egg-wine."

The same distinguished authority offers the startling piece of information that "in all our meetings Gladstone went by the name of Mr. Tipple." As, however, school-boys are noted for giving nicknames the reverse of applicable, it would not be well to found any serious surmises upon this fact.

In addition to the ordinary boyish pleasures and studies, there were two factors in Etonian life of which William Gladstone made full use. The Debating Society he joined and used; the Eton *Miscellany* he founded, and chiefly edited. The one aided his budding oratorical powers, the other broadened his intellectual and literary faculties, and showed what was in him far beyond anything else which occurred during the seven years spent in the famous school. At "The Literati," or "Pop," as it was irreverently called by outsiders, the clever boys from all the different forms met and debated many and varied questions. Current politics were forbidden, but it was not difficult to show tendencies and express opinions under the pretence of discussing the execution of Charles I. or of Strafford; the characters of Oliver Cromwell or of John Milton. Young Gladstone was elected a member on October 15th, 1825, and two weeks later delivered his first speech upon the question, "Is the education of the poor, on the whole, beneficial?" He spoke in favour of the affirmative, and the first words of this first recorded effort of the great orator were: "Sir, in this age of increased and increasing civilization." Imagination almost refuses to comprehend the vast sea of eloquence which has flowed over England since those initial words were uttered.

In the debates which followed, his views were pretty well defined. He took a leading part in discussion as well as in the general business of the society. He championed aristocracy against democracy, denounced the French very freely, and protested against the disarmament of the Highlanders as having been "in the name of policy inexpedient, in the name of God unjust." He defended Strafford, but denounced the Tory Ministers of Queen Anne, "whose measures I firmly believe to have been hostile to British interests, destructive of British glory, and subversive of the splendid and, I trust, lasting fabric of the British Constitution." Many of his sentences in these speeches sound like the better known phrases of Disraeli, when about the same time he commenced to illustrate Conservatism by his powers of description, and adorn it by his beauty of style. Doyle, in his Reminiscences, tells an incident which indicates still more strongly the Tory bent of the lad's mind during these years. "One day," he says, "I was computing the odds for the Derby as they stood in a morning newspaper. He (Mr. Gladstone) leant over my shoulder to look at the horses named. Now, it happened that the Duke of Grafton owned a colt called Hampden, who figured in the aforesaid list. 'Well,' cried Mr. Gladstone, reading off the odds, 'Hampden, at any rate, is in his proper place, between Zeal and Lunacy,' for such, in truth, was the position occupied by the namesake of the illustrious rebel."

In the society Mr. Gladstone soon took the lead, aided by Hallam, Milnes-Gaskell, and others. The last named was a curious specimen of a boy, and one who had fed upon Hansard until he had become a sort of walking encyclopædia. But he was too rich and too indolent to ever become great, although, when he afterwards entered the Commons, he knew its history with an absolute knowledge, and could recite most of the great speeches of ancient and modern times with marvellous exactness. In 1827 the Eton *Miscellany* was born, as a successor to the *Microcosm*, which had enabled George Canning, in years immediately following 1786, to practise his brilliant pen and powerful wit; and to the *Etonian*, which Mackworth Praed had, about 1820, made so striking a literary success.

In these papers the real spirit of Eton found vent, and they are indeed extraordinary productions to come from boyish minds and pens. The *Miscellany* commenced on June 4th, 1827, and was continued for ten months under the editorship chiefly of William Gladstone. For a time he had George Selwyn associated with him, but gradually the bulk of the work devolved, as it generally does, upon the one possessed of the greatest enthusiasm and willingness. Among the other contributors were J. W. Colville, afterwards Sir James, and Chief Justice at Calcutta; Sir F. H. Doyle, whose clever poetry in those early days is still remembered; Milnes-Gaskell, Arthur Hallam, John (afterwards Lord) Hanmer, and the future Bishop Selwyn. The young editor, who was only eighteen years of age, turned his hand to every kind of literary work. Prologues, epilogues, leaders, historical articles, satirical sketches, classical efforts, and humorous poetry—all seemed equally easy to his facile pen.

All these early writings betray a strong imagination and exuberance in language. One of the first was a tribute to Canning, penned shortly after his mournful death, and illustrates, not only the youthful hero-worship of the writer, but his natural eloquence of style:

> "It is for those who revered him in the plenitude of his meridian glory to mourn over him in the darkness of his premature extinction; to mourn over the hopes that we buried in his grave, and the evils that arise from his withdrawing from the scene of life. Surely if eloquence, rarely excelled and seldom equalled—if an expanded mind and judgment, whose vigour was paralleled only by its soundness—if brilliant wit—if a glowing imagination—if a warm heart and an unbending firmness—could have strengthened the frail tenure, and prolonged the momentary duration of human existence, that man had been immortal! But nature could endure no longer. Lest we should give to man the honour due to God—lest we should exalt the object of our admiration into a divinity for our worship—He who calls the weary and the mourner to eternal rest hath been pleased to remove him from our eyes."

Equally striking is the sarcastic and witty poem, "An Ode to the Memory of Wat Tyler." It is a very strong example of the mock-heroic method of treating political subjects, and pours unmitigated sarcasm upon the Radicals of that time. In connection with the following verses, it will be remembered that Thistlewood and Ings were hanged in 1820 for their share in the Cato Street conspiracy to murder Lord Liverpool and his Cabinet, and that Peterloo was the scene of a memorable attack by the constabulary upon a certain Radical meeting in 1819:

"I hymn the gallant and the good,
From Tyler down to Thistlewood;
My muse the trophies grateful sings
The deeds of Miller and of Ings;
She sings of all who, soon or late,
Have burst subjection's iron chain,
Have sealed the bloody despot's fate,
Or cleft a peer or priest in twain.

Shades, that soft Sedition woo
Around the haunts of Peterloo!
That hover o'er the meeting halls,
Where many a voice Stentorian bawls!
Still flit the sacred choir around,
With 'Freedom' let the garrets ring,
And vengeance soon in thunder sound,
On Church and constable and King."

Many other selections from these remarkable writings might be given, but it is necessary to pass on to the Oxford career of the youthful author. One word, however, must be said concerning the opinions of his schoolmates. Sir F. H. Doyle says, in his Memoirs, that the *Miscellany* would have fallen to the ground but for Mr. Gladstone's "untiring energy, pertinacity, and tact." He adds that his own father, a man of ability and experience, predicted the young man's future eminence from "the force of character shown in managing his subordinates, and the combination of ability and power that he has made evident." Milnes-Gaskell wrote his mother, asking to be sent to Oxford instead of Cambridge, so that he could maintain his intimacy with Gladstone, "who is no ordinary individual." Arthur Hallam, who was himself looked upon with a respect and admiration which Tennyson's pen and his own early death have transformed into one of the most mournful and memorable incidents in English literature, declared that, "whatever may be our lot, I am confident that *he* is a bud that will bloom with a richer fragrance than almost any whose early promise I have witnessed."

At Christmas, 1827, William Gladstone left Eton, and for six months studied with private tutors—one of whom was Dr. Turner, shortly afterwards appointed Bishop of Calcutta. In October of the following year he entered Christ Church, Oxford, which has given seven Prime Ministers to the present century. Amongst those whom he found associated with him were many who had also been at Eton, and others who now came for the first time upon the enlarging scene of his life. Some of the students at other colleges whom he naturally encountered, and became more or less intimate with, were Henry Edward Manning, Archibald Campbell Tait, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Lowe, Sidney Herbert, and Sir George Cornewall Lewis. Christ Church was at this time the most aristocratic, the most exclusive, the most conservative, and also the most intellectual of colleges. Much freedom was given in regard to reading and study, but the examinations were eminently calculated to test a man's thoroughness in work and his powers of observation and memory, rather than to serve as tributes to mere cleverness or surface brilliancy. The young man who laboured earnestly and intelligently was sure of success, the bright and reckless "genius" usually failed.

Here was the very place for Gladstone. He was already good at Latin and Greek, which he still followed up closely with his tutor, the Rev. Robert Briscoe. He devoted himself to mathematics also, and now determined to win honours in a direction for which in younger days he had shown but little liking. Logic and Divinity were subjects of importance, and in connection with the latter he attended the lectures of Dr. Burton and Dr. Pusey. He also received private instruction in classics from Charles Wordsworth, afterwards Bishop of St. Andrews. His method of study was simple. Four hours of steady reading in the morning was followed by a constitutional walk. He did not object to suppers and wine parties in the evening, and frequently gave them himself, but always read for two or three hours before going to bed. During the Vacation of 1830, he spent his time with a small reading party at Cuddesden vicarage. "It is curious," writes a contemporary, "to remember reading Plato with Bruce (Lord Elgin), seeing Manning hard at work getting up the text of the Bible, Gladstone working at Hooker, whilst Hamilton (Bishop of Salisbury) was more inclined, I think, to indulge in Aristophanes." Such was the "set" with whom Gladstone worked at Oxford. He also formed an essay society called, after its founder, the W.E.G. Many clever young fellows belonged to it, and one of the survivors remembers Mr. Gladstone reading an elaborate paper upon Socrates' belief in immortality.

But perhaps the central feature of the young man's university career was his connection with the famous Oxford Union. At Eton it had been literature; at Oxford it was oratory. This statement, of course, must be limited by the ever-present factor of study. But, that aside, these two matters stand out clearly and prominently. When Mr. Gladstone began to take an active part in the Debating Society, he almost at once assumed the lead in succession to Manning. He became first secretary and then president, during perhaps the most brilliant period in the history of a brilliant organization. Nearly half a century later, Mr. Gladstone's own Ministry contained seven of the early presidents of the Oxford Union. His first speech was made in February, 1830, and with subsequent deliverances and motions indicated the most pronounced Toryism. He opposed a motion for the removal of Jewish disabilities, and took high ground against the Reform Bill. In April, 1831, Arthur Hallam wrote: "I have had a long letter from Gladstone; he is very bitter against the Reform Bill." He had already joined Charles Wordsworth and Lord Lincoln, in founding an Anti-Reform League, and this, together with the general bitterness of politics, served to accentuate the importance of the Union debates.

About the time of the above-mentioned letter to Hallam, Mr. Gladstone had gone down to attend some public meeting in Leamington, which aroused him to such an extent that he wrote to the *Standard* a letter which is more than interesting, and which concluded with the following outburst:

> "If, Sir, the nobility, the gentry, the clergy, if the sterling sense and stable principle of the country generally, are to be alarmed, over-awed, or smothered, by the expression of popular opinion from meetings such as this—and if no great statesman be raised up in our hour of need to undeceive this unhappy multitude, now rushing or heedlessly sauntering along the pathway of revolution—what is it but a symptom, as infallible as it is appalling, that the day of our greatness and stability is no more, and that the chill and damps of death are already creeping over England's glory? May God avert the omen!"

A little later, on May 16th, came the most noted occurrence in the history of the

Union, and what Doyle terms "the great oratorical event of my time." A motion of censure upon the Whig administration was proposed, but in not sufficiently strong terms, and Mr. Gladstone submitted a rider to it which, in the following words, and after three nights of stormy and eloquent discussion, was carried by 94 votes to 38:

> "That, moreover, they have unwisely introduced, and most unscrupulously forwarded, a measure which threatens not only to change the form of our government, but ultimately to break up the very foundations of social order in the country, as well as materially to forward the designs of those who are engaged in the same project throughout the civilized world."

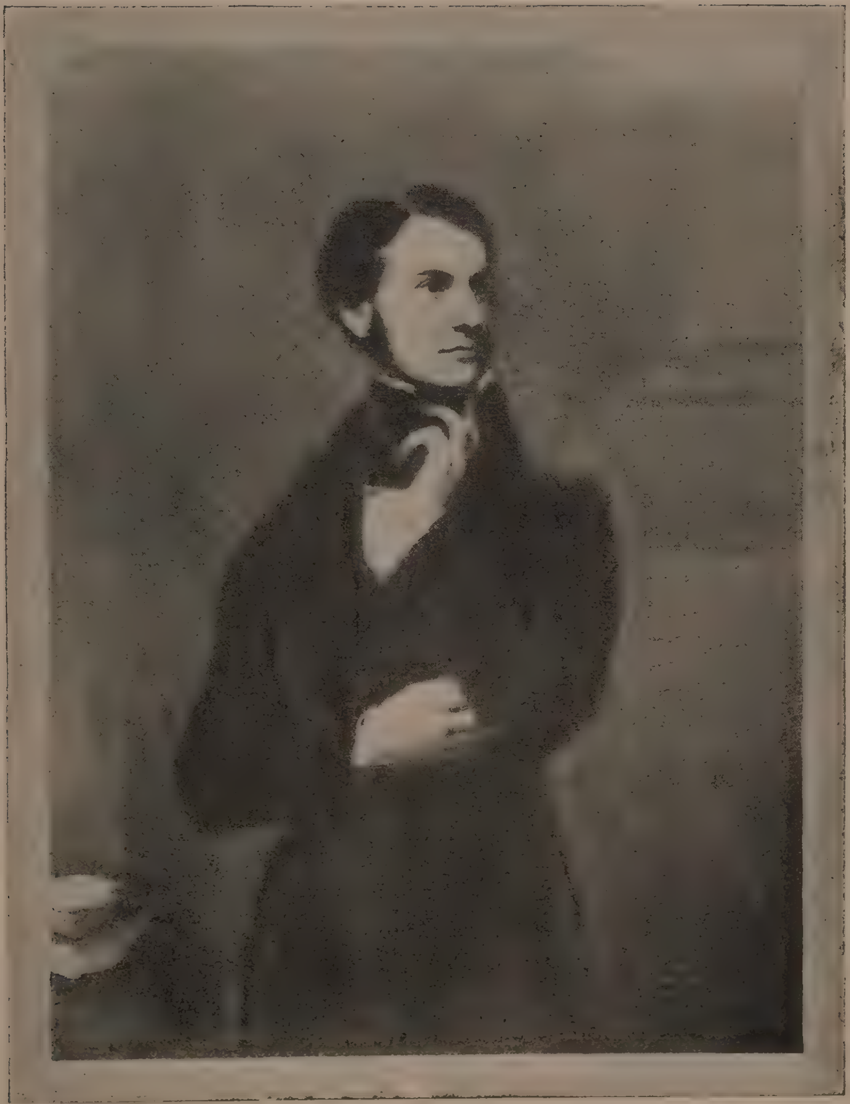
The debate was instinct with the passions of the moment, and the excitement of all present seems to have been intense. Roundell Palmer (Lord Selborne), Sidney Herbert, Lincoln, Doyle, Bruce, and, lastly, Gladstone, took part. Charles Wordsworth, writing to his brother, referred to the various speakers, and then described Gladstone's effort as "the most splendid speech, out and out, that was ever heard in our society." He added, in the enthusiasm of the moment, and in italics, that "the Oxford Union will yet save the country." It must indeed, from the impression made, have been a singularly powerful speech. Doyle says that "most of the speakers rose more or less above their ordinary level, but when Mr. Gladstone sat down we, all of us, felt that an epoch in our lives had occurred." Bishop Charles Wordsworth afterwards wrote that his experience of Mr. Gladstone at this time made him "feel, no less sure than of my own existence, that Gladstone, our then Christ Church undergraduate, would one day rise to be Prime Minister of England." But the greatest effect of the speech, in a practical way, was the feeling of admiration it aroused in the young Earl of Lincoln, whose praises of Gladstone to his father, the Duke of Newcastle, ultimately brought about the former's connection with Newark, and his entrance to the House of Commons.

This was the most memorable event in Mr. Gladstone's Oxford career, with the possible exception of the final one, which occurred on November 24th, 1831, when he headed the list of graduates as a "double first class" in classics and mathematics, an honour Sir Robert Peel had also won some time before. On January 26th following, he received his B.A. degree, and two years afterwards became an M.A. of the University, of which at a later period he was made an Honorary D.C.L. In triumph, therefore, he left college and at once went abroad, where he spent some six months amid the beautiful scenes of historic Italy.

The influence of Oxford upon his future career was very great. It completed the process commenced at home, and continued at Eton. In the studies and pursuits of the University, as it then was, he received full instruction concerning the value of authority, the sacredness of law and precedent, the danger of rashness and innovation, the necessity of respect for existing institutions. Toryism, as then understood, was a creed of intense loyalty to the Crown, even to the extent of regarding Charles I. as a saint and martyr. The claims of rank and birth, the divine nature of the union between Church and State, were regarded as matters of course. Mr. Gladstone was sincerely religious, by home training and early conviction; so that, although the lack of religion at Eton had been replaced by a dry ecclesiastical system not yet fanned into heat and life by the fascinating genius and sanctity of Newman and the "Oxford movement," he seems to have passed through both ordeals unaffected. All accounts join in speaking of his habitual devotion to the Bible, and Cardinal Manning remembers him walking to church with his "Bible and Prayer-book tucked under his arm."

Mr. Gladstone has never forgotten these years. Speaking at Manchester, in 1865, he declared himself to "have loved the University of Oxford with a deep and passionate love." Thirteen years later, he added, in another speech, that "I look back on the education of Oxford, as it taught the love of truth, and provided men with principles of honour which were nowhere, perhaps, so much required as amid the temptations of political controversy. It inculcated a reverence for what was ancient and free and great." But at the same time he expressed the belief, natural under the changed circumstances of his life, that it did not in his day set a due value upon the principles of British liberty.

Such, therefore, was the environment, and such the events in the early career which was now to broaden out into a national and world-wide fame. Mr. Gladstone had enjoyed university privileges, from which Brougham, Lord John Russell, and Lord St. Leonards, Bright, Cobden, and Disraeli, were or had been debarred. He had obtained honours at the university which Palmerston and Lansdowne, Graham and Molesworth, Lord Clarendon, Lord Panmure, Lord Derby, and the great majority of his future associates, or opponents, had failed to get, or perhaps deserve. He, in fact, was to be one of the few exceptions to the rule that a man who really attains distinction at a great English university afterwards drops into comparative obscurity. But, given a combination such as Gladstone now possessed, of reputation as an orator and a scholar, united with aristocratic backing and wealth, and the world, as it was in 1832, stood prepared to offer him more than a chance for success, and position, and power.



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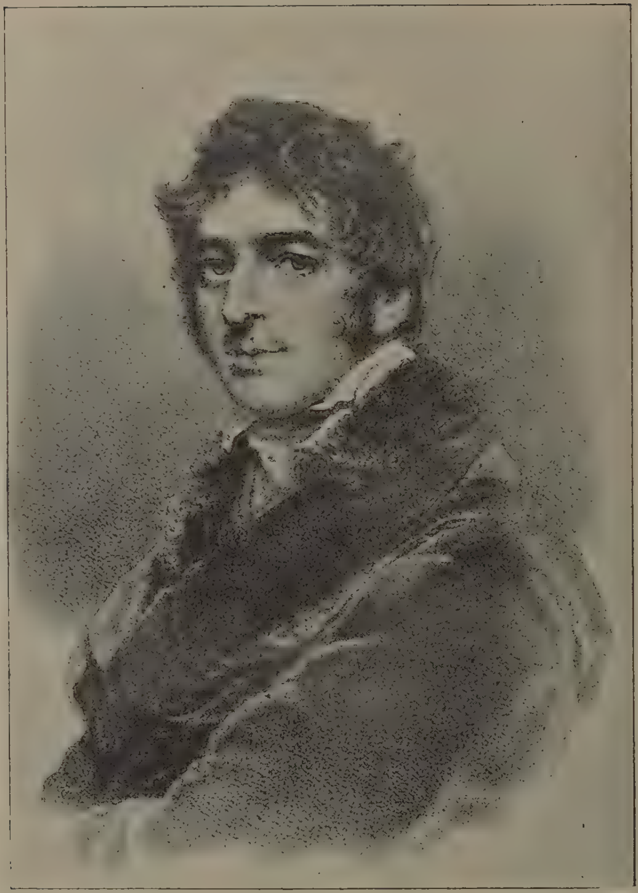
MR. GLADSTONE IN 1839.



WILLIAM LAMB, VISCOUNT MELBOURNE,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1834, 1835-41.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOPE OF THE TORY PARTY.

MR. GLADSTONE entered political life during a period which will ever be memorable in the history of England. The people had just won the greatest constitutional battle in the national annals, and had effected a complete revolution in the workings of Parliamentary institutions. The Reform Bill had received the Royal sanction on the 7th of June, 1832. Immediately following, and amid the wildest hopes of permanent political power and popular benefit on the part of the Liberals, and the most gloomy forebodings and dismal prophecies on the part of the Tories, the general elections were held. The condition of the country was, at this time, deplorable. There was a deep depression in trade, and a falling revenue; riots were of frequent occurrence in the provinces, and in Ireland; labour was scarce, while starving or unemployed labourers were exceedingly numerous; the terrible cholera was claiming its victims everywhere; and a black night of pauperism seemed to be settling over the working classes generally.

The Reform Bill was looked upon as a ray of light amid the darkness. To the people it presented hopes which were, in a material sense, to be very sadly disappointed; to the landowners it seemed to involve a prospect of diminished influence and ruined interests, which they also were to find unfulfilled. While, therefore, the great measure paved the way to widespread reform and beneficial legislation, it failed at the moment to bring about that lightening of popular burdens and amelioration of national conditions which the excited fancy of the new electorate and the masses of the people pictured as the immediate result. The general population still remained poor, though better off than people upon the Continent; newspapers, for a long time, were heavily taxed; postage continued too expensive for popular use; men were still hanged in chains; slavery remained an institution in the Colonies; soldiers continued to receive a hundred or more lashes for trivial offences; the bread of the people was still heavily taxed, and at a time when there was but little external competition to keep down the price; punishments for theft and small offences continued to be almost barbarous in their severity.

The discoveries of a later time, the scientific blessings of a wonderful age, had not yet come into national view; the creation of railways had barely commenced; machinery was still an object of popular terror, and the farmer used his flail as his ancestors had done in distant centuries; matches were unknown, and fire was extracted from flint and steel by a process which now savours of savagery, or the civilization of the Aztecs; chloroform was unknown to the practitioners and sufferers in medical treatment; photography was a dream; and the electric telegraph unheard of. In politics, the Liberals would now be called Conservative; the Tories would be thought too extreme for practical consideration. Radicalism was still revolution, and the troubles in France and Belgium had revived unpleasant memories of the early years of the century.

Paternal government remained a factor in politics. To many the Constitution was more important than the people, and the fact that the interests of both might be combined was not yet clearly understood. To others, the Church was the one great and living principle in the State, and the centre of all political endeavour. In this sentiment Mr. Gladstone shared. The landed interest, and the manufacturing interest, and the shipping interest, were the remaining great factors of the situation. That the Reform Bill created a "popular" interest and made government by the people possible was the really great achievement of that measure.

To Mr. Gladstone, as he hurried home from Italy to take part in the general election, this view of the case had not yet occurred. Memories of Canning permeated his thoughts, and the principles of Burke guided his actions. The Church must be preserved, the Constitution guarded from sacrilegious change, the people prevented from imbibing the ideas of the French Revolution. The youthful enthusiasm which had made him the subject of Lord Lincoln's admiration at Oxford, and caused its venerable walls to ring with his denunciations of Reform, was still controlled by his early environment, and affected by the political opening which now presented itself.

It was natural that the young man who had so distinguished himself at the great Tory university should be introduced to public life by the Duke of Newcastle. When the Earl of Lincoln wrote his father, in a burst of enthusiasm, that "a man has arisen in Israel," there was, indeed, every reason to expect that the Duke would mark the statement and remember the subject of it. He was a most determined and vigorous Tory; one who has enriched the political records of the time with the memorable reference to the constituencies under his control: "Have I not a right to do what I like with my own?" He represented in those days the most exclusive and unbending aristocratic Toryism. Personally kind to those beneath him or dependent upon his will, he had been steeped from his youth up in that fear of the people which the horrors of the Reign of Terror had engendered, and in that dislike of Whigs and Liberalism which the policy of that party during the prolonged struggle with Napoleon had naturally created.

The borough of Newark was one of the many electoral districts which, in those days, felt the forceful control of the great landowners within their limits, or in their vicinity. It was situated not far from Clumber, the beautiful and stately home of the Newcastles, and returned two members to Parliament. One of those seats the Whigs had long struggled to capture, but without success, until the reaction of 1831 against the famous claim of the Duke to control the electors, combined with the glamour of Reform principles, caused the election of Mr. Sergeant Wilde. It was a most annoying and marked defeat, and one which the Duke of Newcastle naturally determined to retrieve. Looking around for an available candidate in the conflict, with which all the country was soon to be alive, he decided to invite the young hero of the Oxford Union. Through a letter from his father, and as the result of a formal invitation from the Red Club, a local organization, Mr. Gladstone therefore returned in haste from Milan, and, in August, commenced his attack upon the constituency.

His first electoral address is of deep personal, as well as historic, interest, and deserves close attention from all who wish to follow closely the evolution of his political principles. It was addressed to "The Worthy Electors of the Borough of Newark-upon-Trent," and ran as follows:

"GENTLEMEN,—Induced by the most flattering assurances of support, I venture to offer myself as a candidate for the high honour of representing you in the ensuing Parliament. It has been recommended to me to avoid introducing excitement in the town by a personal canvass at this early period, unless the example of any other candidate should render it necessary. Let me, however, briefly express, as my claims on your confidence and favour, a warm and conscientious attachment to our Government as a limited Monarchy, and to the Union of our Church and State, as having been to us the source of numberless blessings, and as most strictly adapted to a Christian Nation. I consider that this attachment itself involves the strongest obligation, both to secure the removal of real abuses, and to resist the imputation of those which are imaginary.

"I admit facts, and abstract principles only in subservience to facts, as the true standard of agricultural, commercial, and financial legislation, and recognize the sedulous promotion of British interests as its first and most proper object. The alleviation of the public burdens consistently with the strict adherence to our national engagements—the defence, in particular, of our Irish Establishments—the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes—the adjustment of our Colonial Interests, with measures for the moral advancement and further legal protection of our fellow-subjects in slavery—and the observance of a dignified and impartial Foreign policy—are objects, for the attainment of which, should it be your pleasure to return me to Parliament, I hope to labour with honesty, diligence, and perseverance, recognizing no interests but those which are truly national.

"When the proper time shall be considered to have arrived, it will be alike my duty and pleasure to enter into the most unreserved personal communications, conscious, as I am, that they form the only satisfactory basis of mutual confidence.

"I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
"Your obedient and faithful servant,
"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"*London, August* 4, 1832."

The reception given to the candidate was very mixed. Utter ignorance prevailed concerning his character, career, or personality.

The *Nottingham Review*, a Whig organ, declared that no one knew who he was, but that he had "announced his intentions in a hand-bill." Another Whig paper referred to him as "a Liverpool merchant," while the *Journal*, a Tory paper, described him as "a gentleman of considerable commercial experience and talent," and, of course, predicted his success. Sergeant Wilde was again the Whig candidate, and Mr. Handley the second Tory nominee. Writing many years afterwards, Mr. Gladstone described the canvass which followed as being "the most exciting period of my life; I never worked harder or slept so little." At the nomination meeting he was mercilessly "heckled," especially as to the Duke's share in bringing him to the borough. He got around this by declaring himself the nominee of the Red Club, which in a sense was true. And, in spite of the Newcastle influence, the contest was lively and exciting.

Before long, however, the young candidate began to make a most favourable personal impression. He was at this time nearly twenty-two, with a splendid physical constitution, which his student-like bearing somewhat modified in appearance. And he was soon known to have the prospect of ample means, together with a power of copious and ready speech. His pale complexion, dark hair, and piercing eyes also combined with strongly-marked features to give him a striking and pleasant appearance. At the conclusion of his canvass he again addressed the electors in a somewhat elaborate manifesto. In this document he declared that "we must watch and resist that uninquiring and undiscriminating desire for change amongst us which threatens to produce, along with partial good, a melancholy preponderance of mischief." He was persuaded that unless this movement was checked the result "would aggravate beyond computation the deep-seated evils of our social state, and the heavy burthens of our industrial classes." For the mitigation of existing evils, the country must look to the restoration of sounder general principles. "I mean especially that principle on which alone the incorporation of Religion with the State in our Constitution can be defended; that the duties of Governors are strictly and peculiarly religious; and that Legislatures, like Individuals, are bound to carry throughout their acts the spirit of the high truths they have acknowledged."

Upon this line there must, he declared, be "neither truckling nor temporizing." He went on to say that sedulous attention should be given to the interests of the poor, to the promotion of an adequate remuneration for labour. As to the question of slavery, he took high scriptural ground; declared that the condition was admitted and permitted by the Bible; defended himself against the Anti-Slavery Society, which had issued a circular in opposition to his candidacy; opposed immediate emancipation of the slaves, but favoured efficient Christian instruction as a step towards preparing them for a future condition of freedom. The address concluded with a reference to the people's enthusiasm in rallying around their "ancient flag," and breathed throughout a spirit which Mr.

Gladstone himself, many years after, declared to have been that of "a warm and loyal Tory."

Only one of his speeches in this campaign has been reported and preserved. It was delivered at a meeting of the Red Club, on December 2nd, when that body was presented with a flag by the ladies of Newark. The report describes it as "an enthusiastic eulogium of the British flag." The speaker declared that "they all knew how the red flag of England had always been the symbol of national moderation and national power; how it had waved during the awful period of revolutionary war as a signal of rallying to the combatant and of shelter to the fallen. When every throne of the Continent had crumbled into dust beneath the tyrannous strength of France, England remained the last refuge of civilization, and the last hope of mankind. Our countrymen did not dally, or compromise, or concede, but they stood boldly in the breach, firm in their reliance in Almighty Power, and so that refuge became sure, and that hope triumphant. The blast which tore every other ensign to tatters served only to unfold their own and display its beauty and its glory."

This was rather eloquent language, and must have naturally strengthened the young candidate with all who had Conservative proclivities. His weakest point was the question of slavery, and it was upon this that Wilde directed his chief criticism and attack. The Gladstone family were declared to be "traffickers in human flesh," and the Tory candidate's Biblical quotations were returned in good stead by the verse from Exodus, "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." There were many other amusing incidents in the election. During the two days' poll, the excitement rose high, and naturally included considerable fighting, breaking of heads, and destruction of banners. The close of the first day of polling showed a majority for Gladstone, who proceeded at once, and in the pitch dark, to address a crowd out of the window of his sitting-room at the Clinton Arms. The speaker was interrupted by a stone thrown from the outside of the gathering, which came within a few inches of his head. He has since stated that the man who threw it was seized, but that he "arranged the matter by voting for me next day." At the close of the second day the result was announced as Gladstone, 882; Handley, 793; Wilde, 719.

The Whigs were deeply disappointed, and vented their local feelings by the smashing of windows, while making the general claim that the voters had been driven like sheep or slaves into supporting the candidate of the Duke of Newcastle whether they would or not. Open voting, of course, made influence or intimidation very easy and probable, so that in a borough where many persons depended for their daily bread upon the word of the Duke the contention may fairly be allowed some force. Still, it is not unlikely that Mr. Gladstone could have been elected without such aid, and the gratuitous sneer of a London paper called the *Reflector* at "the unknown person, fresh from college, whose mind is like a sheet of foolscap," and whose father had "made his gold from the blood of black slaves," was abusive and utterly undeserved.

Indeed, the press of the country had commenced to notice the young man whose university career had been so distinguished, and whose eloquence and facility of speech were now so freely admitted. The *Nottingham Journal*, for instance, declared him to be "a gentleman of amiable manners and the most extraordinary talent," and went on to predict that he would "one day be classed amongst the most able statesmen in the British Senate." The *Times* referred to the election as an evidence of the Duke of Newcastle's influence, while Arthur Hallam wrote to a friend that it was a great triumph for Gladstone—"He has made his reputation by it." Another college classmate burst into poetry, the sentiments of which serve, at least, to show the impression he had left upon his friends at Oxford :

"His was no head contentedly which press'd
The downy pillow in obedient rest ;
His was no tongue which meanly stoop'd to wear
The guise of virtue, while his heart was bare ;
But all he thought through ev'ry action ran ;
God's noblest work—I've known one honest man."

It was at this time that his father made a remark which is very interesting, and especially so to opponents of the great Liberal leader. John Gladstone, who had not long before removed to a charming country place—Fasque House, in Kincardineshire—was dining with a well-known Liverpool merchant called Bolton. The story comes to us from an uncle of Bishop Charles Wordsworth, and is told by the latter. He says that, after dinner, "my uncle" took occasion to congratulate Mr. Gladstone upon the remarkable success of his son William, and to express the hope that he would be equally successful in the House of Commons. To which the father replied, "Yes, sir ; I thank you ; my son has certainly distinguished himself at the university, and I trust he will continue to do so, for there is no doubt he is a man of great ability ; but," he added, "he has no stability."

Leaving to one side, however, any consideration of the future, William Gladstone was now a member of the House of Commons, a rising man in the estimation of all who knew him, and destined before long to be "the hope of the stern, unbending Tories" of the country generally. He had entered public life by the easy path of a "rotten borough." It was a covered way along which Burke and Pitt, Fox and Canning, Mackintosh and Macaulay, have walked in comparative youthfulness into the great assembly of the realm. And Mr. Gladstone has always respected the influence which, as a young man, thus gave him his first opening in the path to political power. He has freely recognized the value of "rotten boroughs" in this sense, and was himself the last man in the House of Commons who ventured to utter a word in their behalf.

When Parliament met on January 29th, 1833, there were three hundred new members. The Reform Bill, though unable to affect Newark, had carried the country generally for the Whigs. There was, however, a compact Tory party under Sir Robert Peel's leadership, and an aggressive Irish section which followed O'Connell. William the Fourth was King, and the chief questions at issue in the country were those connected with the Irish Church Establishment, the general condition of the poor, and the maintenance of slavery in the Colonies. Cobden, at this time, was a young calico printer, and Bright was busy spinning cotton. The future Marquess of Salisbury and Prime Minister was an infant; Lord Rosebery and one-half of Mr. Gladstone's last Cabinet were not yet born; Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain, and the Lord Hartington of later days, had not yet seen the light. Carlyle and Tennyson, Dickens and George Eliot, were struggling in obscurity, while Thackeray was dreaming of becoming an artist.

During a debate on the slave question in May following, Mr. Gladstone delivered his maiden speech in the House. It was along lines which had been clearly enough indicated in the Newark contest, but was primarily and chiefly a defence of his father's estates in Demerara and their management. On June 3rd, he made a second and more elaborate speech, in which he deprecated all cruelty or ill-treatment in the control of slaves, but urged strongly that Englishmen had a right to "their own honestly and legally acquired property." Moral and Christian instruction should, he thought, precede all efforts at liberation, and, in any event, discrimination should be made between idle and industrious slaves. He, of course, opposed immediate emancipation, and claimed that "England rested her power not upon physical force, but upon her principles, her intellect, and virtue; and if this great measure (negro emancipation) were not placed upon a fair basis, or was conducted by violence, he should lament it as a signal for the ruin of the Colonies and the downfall of the Empire."

The ultimate result of the Parliamentary struggle is known to the world. The abolition of British slavery was decreed, and $100,000,000 were voted to the planters and owners as compensation. It was of this famous debate, and of Mr. Gladstone, that Lord Albemarle, in his Recollections, writes: "One evening, on taking my seat, I found on his legs a beardless youth with whose appearance and manners I was greatly struck; he had an earnest, intelligent countenance, and large, expressive, black eyes. Young as he was, he had evidently what is called 'the ear of the House,' and yet the cause he advocated was not one likely to interest a popular assembly—that of the planter versus the slave. I had placed myself behind the Treasury bench. 'Who is he?' I asked one of the Ministers. I was answered: 'He is the member for Newark—a young fellow who will some day make a great figure in Parliament.' My informant was Edward Geoffrey Stanley, then Whig Secretary for the Colonies, and in charge of the Negro Emancipation Bill." It may be added that Mr. Stanley, not long afterwards, drifted into Conservatism, and was ultimately leader of that party as Earl of Derby.

From this time forward, and in spite of the unfavourable subject of his first speech, Mr. Gladstone's progress was steady and sure. He took a profound interest in all matters pertaining to the Church. It held, in fact, the first place in his affections and in his opinions. The second object of attention was the general condition of the Colonies. But before these features of his early Parliamentary career can be more fully entered into, it will be well to consider two occurrences which had a very great effect upon the young politician's entire future. The one was the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne; the other was his own marriage.

The death of William IV. may be said to mark an epoch in the history of the English monarchy. The House of Hanover had never yet won the personal affections of the people. The Stuarts, with all their faults and follies, seemed to have the gift of attracting and retaining a sentimental adhesion which their successors from over the sea were unable to obtain. No matter how notorious the bad faith of Charles the First might be, loyalty to the throne remained a powerful popular factor, and formed the basis for continued self-sacrifice and much earnest patriotism. So with Charles II. Despite the ingratitude and profligacy for which he was famous, his followers, in the event of a serious rebellion, would probably have been as loyal and devoted as ever they were to the first of his name. But the Hanoverian kings, for many and varied reasons, had been unpopular, and there is little doubt that in the third decade of the century there was much genuine republicanism in the country, and much discontent, which was inclining others in the same direction.

These were the circumstances which made men of Conservative tendencies, such as Gladstone, try to dissociate the idea and theory of monarchy from the personality of the King, and which formed Tories out of many who were Liberals by nature and by moderate inclination. But in spite of personal weakness or unpopularity in the monarch, they believed in the general principle of monarchical government, and were thus kept out of the ranks of developing Liberalism by fear of the republican tendencies to be found amongst its supporters. Here, therefore, the young Queen's accession, in 1837, worked a marvellous change. Gracious in manner, charming in appearance, tactful in conduct, Her Majesty soon won her way into the hearts of the people. Disloyalty became almost impossible where there was no one to attack, and little to criticize. The atmosphere of the Court became clear and pure, and the moral health of the people grew stronger by force of a high example and wise discretion. The Whig Premier, Lord Melbourne, also performed his constitutional duty of guiding and instructing the youthful

Sovereign with signal discretion, and before long all taint of republicanism had left the Whig or Liberal party, and the ranks of the people generally. So marked was the change that in 1841, during a contest at Newark, Mr. Gladstone declared it to have been "almost incredible." Incidentally one of the great obstacles was thus removed from his future path towards Liberalism.

Mr. Gladstone was married on July 25th, 1839. His handsome bride, who has since been known during half a century in her husband's memorable public life, was Miss Catherine Glynne, the elder daughter of Sir Stephen Richard Glynne, of Hawarden Castle, who had died during her infancy. Her sister Mary was united at the same time to George, fourth Lord Lyttelton. It is said that at a dinner party, some years before this event, Miss Glynne was sitting beside a member of the Government, who pointed out Mr. Gladstone—then unknown to her—and said: "Mark that young man; he will yet be Prime Minister of England." Afterwards they had met occasionally, and during a tour on the Continent, in 1838, had seen a great deal of each other. A party had been formed and had visited Mount Etna and Rome, and traversed many scenes of beauty and fame. The pleasant association this brought about had resulted in the double engagement. In an almost forgotten work, called "Gossip of the Century," we find the author describing a trip down the Rhine in 1838, and mentioning the following incident: "We met an English party, consisting of two gentlemen and two ladies, the latter tall and stylish girls, who, with their cavaliers, were thoroughly enjoying this their first acquaintance with the Rhine scene. One of the gentlemen was Sir Stephen Glynne, the ladies were his sisters, and the other gentleman was Mr. W. E. Gladstone. . . . . He was tall and dark, and his manner was marked, not only by a certain courtesy and elegance, but by that degree of reserve natural to an Englishman of the upper class."

The wedding was an occasion for great local rejoicing, mingled with some sorrow. The Misses Glynne were very popular in their neighbourhood, very sympathetic, and very charitable. Hence the regret at their departure. The marriage procession from the castle to the church was very long; the church itself was crowded with guests, and the pathway was strewn with flowers by the surrounding multitude. Fireworks and festivities of all kinds finished the day for the villagers of Chester. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone spent their honeymoon at Norton Priory, the seat of Sir Richard Brooke. Mr. John Gladstone and the two brothers, Robertson and Thomas, were present at the wedding, while Sir F. H. Doyle, who acted as one of the groomsmen to his old friend, immediately afterwards composed a poem in which five verses were devoted to Mrs. Gladstone. Leaving aside the natural poetic license and friendly enthusiasm of the moment, there is much that was really prophetic in the following lines:

"High hopes are thine, oh! elder flower,
Great duties to be greatly done;
To soothe in many a toil-worn hour
The noble heart which thou hast won.

"Covet not the rest of those
Who sleep through life unknown to fame:
Fate grants not passionless repose
To her who weds a glorious name.

"He presses on through calm and storm
Unshaken, let what will betide;
Thou hast an office to perform,
To be his answering spirit bride."

How well Mrs. Gladstone has helped her husband in the long years which have since rolled by will be recorded in the history of her country. Through struggle and turmoil, through good repute and ill, through failure and success, she has ever been a noble helpmate to the Liberal chieftain. The ups and downs of a mingled career have indeed proved Mr. Gladstone's marriage a substantial personal factor in all his successes, a strong defence in his many defeats.

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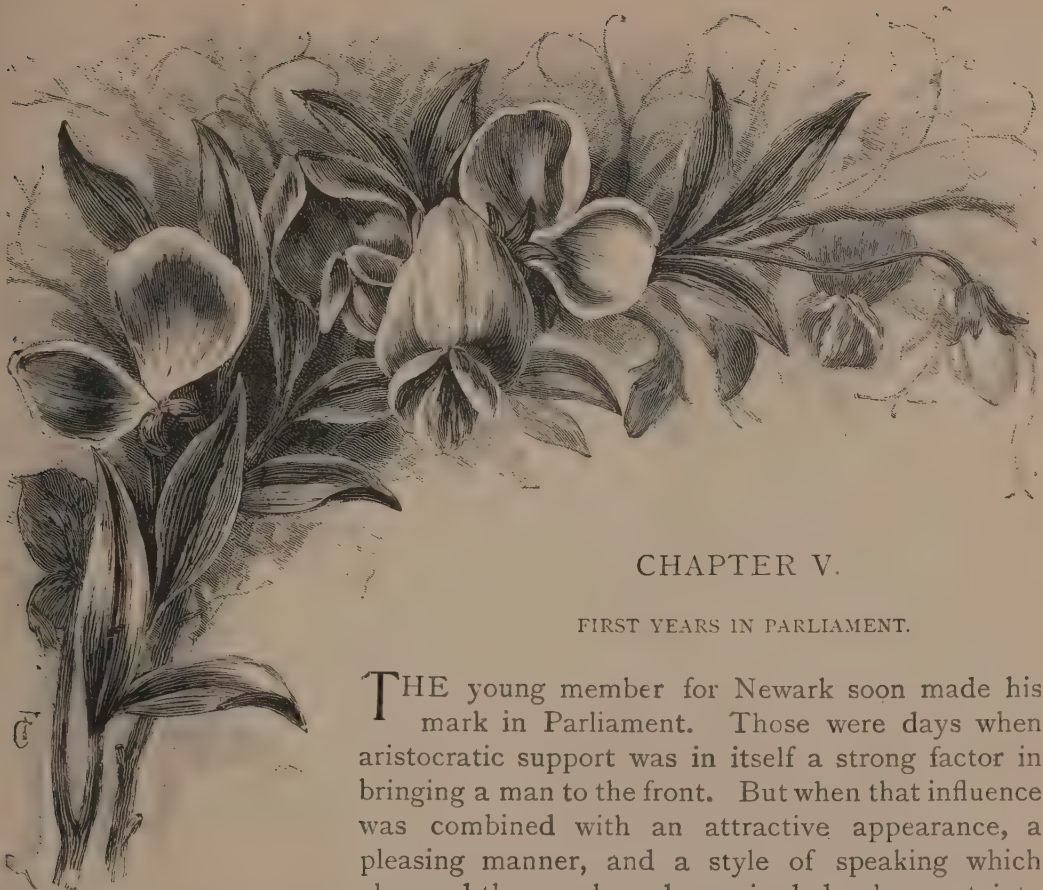


CHAPTER V.

FIRST YEARS IN PARLIAMENT.

THE young member for Newark soon made his mark in Parliament. Those were days when aristocratic support was in itself a strong factor in bringing a man to the front. But when that influence was combined with an attractive appearance, a pleasing manner, and a style of speaking which charmed the people and promised development into the highest forms of oratory, success was practically assured. And during the years which immediately followed his first election, the Whigs, or Liberals, continued to steadily lose ground, while the Tories, under the leadership of Sir Robert Peel, as steadily gained in popular estimation.

Catholic emancipation had been disposed of; the Reform Bill was a thing of the past; the glowing expectations of its supporters as to instant and practical and individual benefit were being slowly blasted; the Corn Laws had not yet become a question of national stir and stress. Many people felt like resting on their oars after a great victory; the reaction naturally grew in force as the glories of Reform faded into the past, and the fruits of agitation became less and less visible. It was therefore a season of decreasing popularity for Lord Grey and his followers, and a period of steady advancement for those who believed Conservatism to be the great policy of the past, the present, and the future.

The men of that day are worthy of more than a passing note. The leaders whom Mr. Gladstone followed in this early part of his career, and the men whom he opposed, alike present a remarkable combination of greatness in name or character. Upon the Tory side in the House of Lords were statesmen of the most uncompromising severity of view. First, and foremost, was the Duke of Wellington, with his determined countenance, his thin and erect form, his piercing eyes, and utter indifference to popularity or to the public. There also was the Duke of Buckingham, who had spoken of the Reform Bill as containing "the demon of Republicanism in all its hideousness," and as representing principles worse than cholera or pestilence. Lord Eldon, at over eighty years of age, continued to believe in the divine right of whatever exists, and to refuse even the courtesy of acquaintanceship to political opponents. Lord Lyndhurst, handsome and cheerful, gave to his party all the great advantages of high reputation, charming manners, and sophistry skill and coolness in both tactics and oratory.

Upon the other side, in the Lords, were men of equally high reputation. Earl Grey, with his sound judgment and lofty character—an aristocrat to the backbone—led the Whigs until 1835, when Lord Melbourne took the reins of Government. Debonair, and apparently reckless in conduct, and indifferent in sentiment, the new Premier was, like his predecessor, an aristocrat to the finger-tips. With lots of moral courage, he was yet destined to lead his party in days when reform was a drug in the market, and an enterprising policy appeared absolutely unnecessary. Lord Durham, afterwards famed in Canadian annals, was looked upon by the progressive and Radical element as a coming Premier; and Lord Brougham held a place which was as unique then as it is upon the pages of English history during many years.

The great rival of Lyndhurst, he was by turns sensitive, bitter, sarcastic, eloquent, but always erratic. His lofty forehead, the piercing glare of his eyes, a face which was remarkable for its harsh features and terrific scowl, his attenuated form, combined to render his appearance almost indescribable. When we add to this an absolute indifference to refinement of language, or even ordinary conventionalities, in his fierce and frequent personal attacks upon opponents; an amazing fund of information; a powerful and tenacious memory; a marvellous degree of industry, and unusual rashness, the figure presented is certainly most peculiar and picturesque. Upon the same side sat the Duke of Leinster, who will be remembered, not for his position and rent-roll, but for having once addressed a petition to His Majesty in favour of Catholic emancipation, which drew from the Duke of Wellington—then Premier—the terse reply:

> "My Lord Duke,—I have had the honour of receiving the petition you forwarded to me, along with the tin case which enclosed it."

Amongst the leading Tories in the Commons—the men who regarded the young member from Newark with approval and hope—were Sir Robert Peel, fluent, plausible, dignified, with a fine physique, full, round face and red hair; Lord Stanley, destined one day to become Prime Minister and Earl of Derby, but then a young man with a reputation for intellectual acuteness, hasty temper, and skill in debate; Sir James Graham, once the idol of the Radicals; and Sir Francis Burdett, also a Conservative, after long and famous years of Radicalism. Lord John Russell was, of course, a leading Whig. Small in stature, with a weakly appearance, and a poor reputation as a speaker, he was yet an admirable tactician, whilst his earnestness always inspired respect. Lord Palmerston was slowly rising in popular esteem, but held office at this time more from family influence than because of ability displayed or attention exhibited to Parliamentary duties. Tall and handsome, with black hair, and dressed in the extreme of fashion, he was thought an indifferent speaker, but a pleasant personality. The *Times* had given him the nickname of "Cupid."

Henry Lytton Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling and Bulwer, was a young man without much weight in the House; Edward Lytton Bulwer, like his brother, was tall and handsome, but chiefly known for his novels; Joseph Hume, the Radical, looking more like a prosperous farmer than anything else, led in the pounds, shilling, and pence policy of the economical school; while John Arthur Roebuck, cynical and petulant, foreshadowed a career of much promise, but little performance. Daniel O'Connell, with his athletic figure, ruddy face, and jovial appearance, was exercising a steadily growing influence in the country; while Richard Lalor Shiel contributed his imaginative and impulsive eloquence to the debates of the time. Macaulay had not long since returned from India, had electrified the members by an eloquent maiden speech, and then taken his place as one of the orators of the House.

Lord Althorp, honest and honourable to a remarkable degree, led the Whigs; Lord Ashley was preparing for a career of philanthropic splendour as Earl of Shaftesbury; Grote and Ricardo represented the school of philosophic Radicals; Sir Robert Inglis voiced the feeling that England's sun had set forever on the fatal 7th of June, 1832; whilst Lord Howick and Lord Morpeth, afterwards Earl Grey and Earl of Carlisle, respectively, represented the old school of dignified Whiggism.

Such was the Parliament in which Mr. Gladstone had to establish his place and rank. Such were some of the leaders whom he met and worked with, or fought against. Mr. Disraeli had not yet entered the House, and did not until after the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837. His reputation, however, as a novelist, a brilliant talker, and a man of fashion, was growing, while his confidence in himself was so great that a week after Mr. Gladstone had taken his seat he attended a debate in which Bulwer and Stanley, Macaulay and Shiel, Grant and Russell had shared, and wrote to his sister that it was the finest display of oratory there had been for years. "But," he added, "between ourselves, I could floor them all. This *entre nous :* "I was never more confident of anything than that I could carry everything before me in that House."

Mr. Gladstone was equally sure of himself, but his surroundings were vastly more advantageous, and his training infinitely better suited to the career which lay before him than had been the case with his future rival. His friends entertained a most intense belief in his powers. Arthur Hallam wrote, just after his election: "We want such men as that. In some things he is likely to be obstinate and prejudiced; but he has a fine fund of high, chivalrous Tory sentiment, and a tongue, moreover, to let it loose with." And it was a good time for a new man to appear upon the political horizon. There may have been many things in the House which were unpleasant, and a famous rhyme of the day, written by Praed, indicates that these features were fairly conspicuous:

"Sleep, Mr. Speaker; Harvey will soon
Move to abolish the sun and the moon;
Hume will, no doubt, be taking the sense
Of the House on a question of sixteen-pence.
Statesmen will howl, and patriots bray;
Sleep, Mr Speaker; sleep while you may."

But upon the whole, and despite this sarcasm, it was a great and dignified assembly, and one in which a young member of modest mien might be sure of attention and respect. Mr. Gladstone, indeed, speaking in 1884, referred to it as "the noblest assembly in the world," and enthusiastically praised its dignity, moral tone, and discipline, as experienced in the days when he first entered upon Parliamentary life. He certainly had every personal reason to be satisfied with that period. Before two years were passed, his speeches had won him the careful attention of the most curiously complex body of men in the United Kingdom, and, according to a story which seems well founded, had induced Lord Althorp to point him out to the King as a brilliant orator. His high personal character, and connection with both the commercial and aristocratic interests of the day, further commended him for position and promotion. He had, meanwhile, followed up his defence of the West Indian planters, in 1834, by a vigorous opposition to the Church Temporalities Bill, in which it was proposed by the Government to regulate and improve the condition of the Established Church in Ireland. At this time, and amongst eight millions of people, there were only 80,000 Episcopalians, and these were governed by five archbishops and eighteen bishops, while the income of the Church amounted to $750,000, largely drawn from Roman Catholics. The measure proposed to remedy these evils, so far as Church government and the application of the tithes were concerned. Mr. Gladstone strenuously opposed the bill, and while admitting that there might be abuses, and that the Irish Church had slumbered, declared that he was fully prepared to defend the Establishment, and to oppose the reduction in its episcopate, or the increase of the burdens of its clergy.

It had become, he thought, a well-established principle, that as long as a Church was national, the State ought to be taxed to support it; and if the Government meant to maintain the Protestant Church in Ireland, they ought to enforce this maxim. He appealed to them not to place the Church on an untenable foundation, and declared, in conclusion, that he could only hope against hope that the measure would have an opposite effect. Notwithstanding these and similar protests, however, the bill passed by a good majority. Early in the succeeding year, the young member spoke again, this time in vain opposition to the appointment of a committee for inquiry into the bribery and corruption which were alleged to be prevalent in Liverpool. He denied its existence in sufficient degree to warrant such action, but was out-voted, and, unfortunately, was proved afterwards to have been mistaken.

Meantime, William the Fourth had taken advantage of the succession of Lord Althorp to the Earldom of Spencer to declare that the Whigs no longer controlled Parliament, or had the confidence of the country. He, therefore, dismissed Lord Melbourne from office, and called the Duke of Wellington to take charge of the Government until Sir Robert Peel, who was in Rome, could be recalled and placed in power by this remarkable action of the Royal prerogative. The loss of Althorp really had been a severe blow to the party which he led in the Commons, and this fact, together with the difficulty of finding a strong successor in his important post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, had given the King a plausible and long-looked-for opportunity. It was of Althorp's famous honesty of character and reputation for candour that Peel once spoke when he complained that it was only necessary for him to shake his head in denial in order to make the most carefully-prepared Tory statements or charges fall to the ground, so far as the House was concerned. During the interregnum which followed before Peel's arrival, the member for Newark was one of those who were "slated" as certain of a place in the new Ministry. And, as it turned out, the expectation was a correct one.

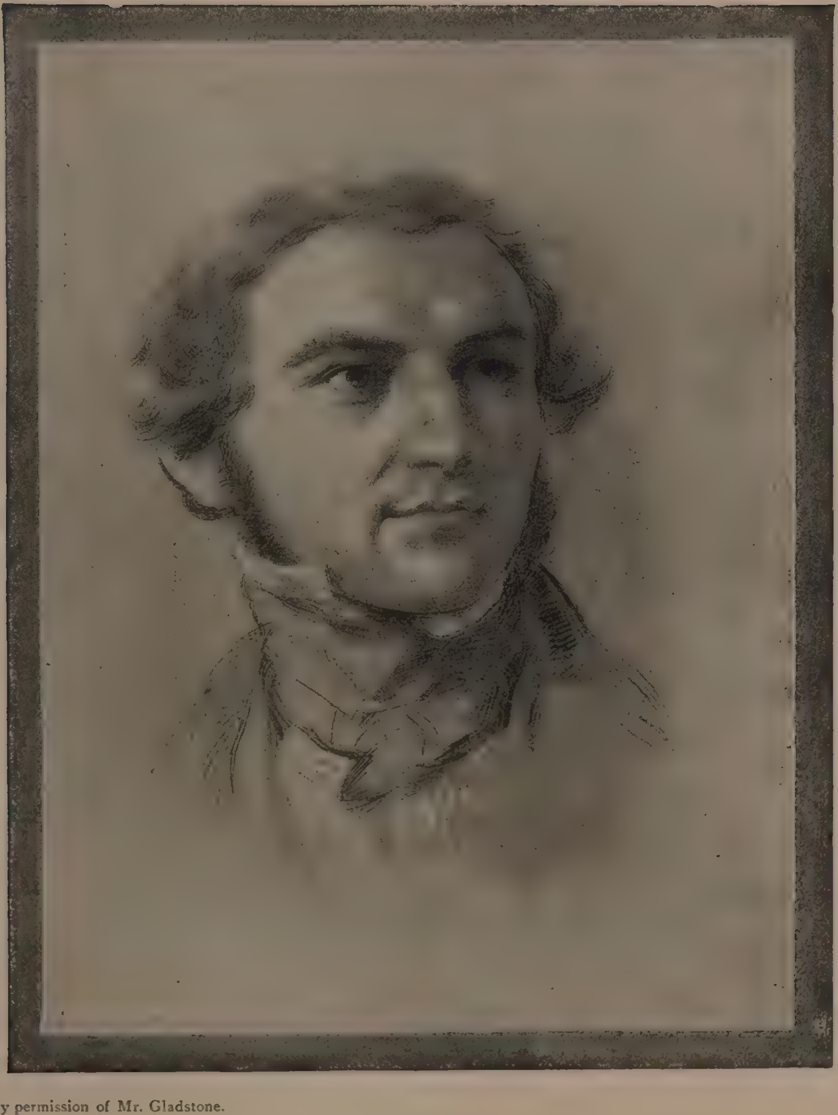
The first position offered him was that of Under-Secretary for War and the Colonies, but it was declined on the ground that his connection with the West Indian slave question might hamper his Colonial action and promote misapprehension in certain quarters. He therefore accepted the inferior post of a Lord of the Treasury, one of the others being his old friend Lord Lincoln, who had also been elected to Parliament at the same time as himself. Peel was, at this period, undergoing a sort of political transformation. He had already helped, in 1829, to pass the Catholic Relief measure, and there is little doubt that the failure of the Tory prognostications as to the fate of the country, under that and the Reform Bill legislation, was slowly shaping his mind in the direction of the still greater change of ten years afterwards.

Gladstone's manifesto to his constituents on seeking re-election shows, however, few signs of any similar modification. He denounced the Whig Ministers in this document for having a bias towards "rash, violent, and indefinite innovation," and added that there were even some amongst the servants of the King "who did not scruple to solicit the suffrages of their constituents with promises to act on the principles of Radicalism." He declared that the late Cabinet had afforded no security against new and extensive changes in the elective system, and had offered no reasonable protection to the millions dependent upon Land. While strongly inclined towards the "sacred duty" of reforming real abuses, he, at the same time, expressed grave fears concerning certain dangerous tendencies which were becoming apparent in the country:

> "The question has, then, as it appears to me, become whether we are to hurry onwards at intervals, but not long ones, through the medium of the Ballot, short Parliaments, and other questions, called popular, into Republicanism or anarchy; or whether, independently of all party distinctions, the people will support the Crown in the discharge of its duty to maintain in efficiency and transmit in safety those old and valuable institutions under which our country has greatly flourished."

At the nomination meeting in Newark which followed, Mr. Gladstone added a somewhat significant utterance. Change, as change, was declared not to be good, but the nature of the change must determine whether it would be a benefit, and, "while the first duty of a statesman is to preserve. the second is to improve." This, of course, was a very general statement, and was followed by a vigorous appeal to rally around the throne and the altar and the new Ministry of Sir Robert Peel, but it nevertheless shows that disinclination to remain stationary which was to actuate so great a part of his future career. As Mr. Handley had declined to be again a candidate, the election went by acclamation to Mr. Gladstone and his former opponent, Sergeant Wilde. In the country generally the Conservatives gained largely by the dissolution, the members in the new Parliament being estimated at 273 Tories to 380 Liberals. But, of course, the minority was still very great, and it made Peel's task a difficult and doubtful one.

The young politician, however, continued to make his way. Charles Greville, in his famous diary, records a feeling of surprise that such a minor office should have been given Gladstone, "who is a very clever man." Early in 1835 he was transferred to the Colonial Under-Secretaryship, which at this time included that of War, and which he seems now to have thought might be properly accepted. Lord Aberdeen, who was then at the head of this department, wrote to an old friend regarding the new appointment as follows: "I have chosen a young man whom I did not know, and whom I never saw,



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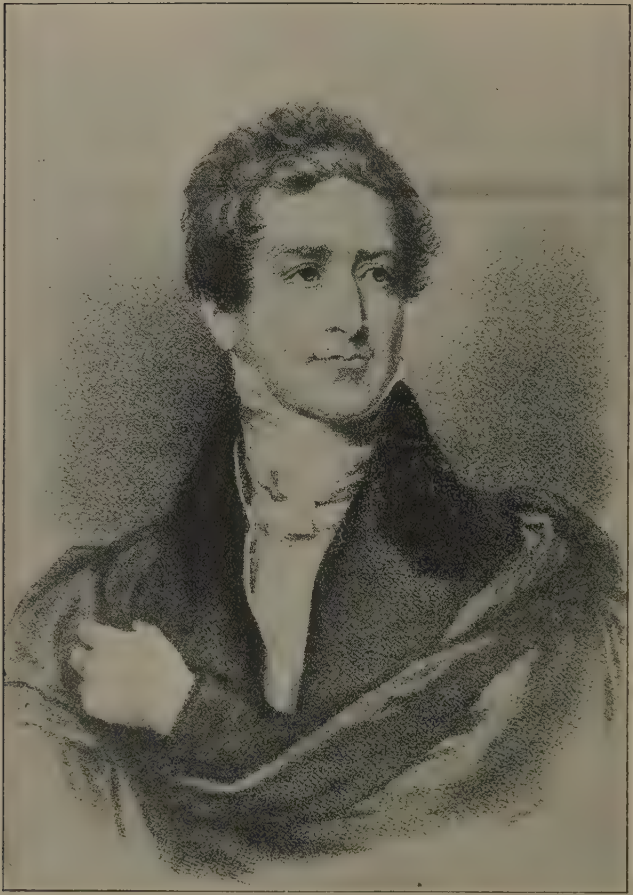
MR. GLADSTONE IN 1841.

Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and Master of the Mint.



SIR ROBERT PEEL, Bart.,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1841-46.

but of whose good character and abilities I had often heard. He is the young Gladstone, and I hope he will do well. He has no easy part to play in the House of Commons, but it is a fine opening for a young man of talent and ambition, and places him in the way to the highest distinction."

The new official went to meet his chief with fear and trembling. As he himself wrote in after years, "I had heard of his high character; but I had also heard of him as a man of cold manners and close and even haughty reserve. I do not recollect the matter of the conversation, but before I had been three minutes with him all my apprehensions had melted away like snow in the sun; and I came away from that interview conscious indeed of his dignity, but of a dignity tempered by a peculiar purity and gentleness, associated with impressions of his kindness and even friendship." Such was Mr. Gladstone's first meeting with a statesman who was then, and always remained, somewhat misunderstood by the general public, but who became, in the future, the closest friend and associate of his youthful assistant, and of whom Mr. Gladstone has spoken (1884) as "the dearest and most revered of all political friends with whom it has been my duty to act." Many years afterward Lord Aberdeen's grandson, and successor in the title and estates, was destined to be an equally close personal friend, and to receive various important appointments at the hands of Mr. Gladstone.

This change in position did not necessitate re-election, but, in February, Mr. Gladstone issued an address to his constituents, which, while reiterating his adhesion to Toryism, at the same time gives hints of a certain interesting development of opinion. "It has been," he observed, "and continues to be, my humble but earnest desire to blend and harmonize the distinct, but not necessarily discordant, principles of preservation and improvement, and to secure their efficacy together with their union, maintaining each in its due relative position, and defending each with increased anxiety, according as either of them may be assailed in opposite directions by the alternate political caprices of successive periods." This characteristic language involves an evident approach towards what became afterwards known as Peelism, and indicates that the influence of Peel was already being felt by the young member for Newark.

At this period—January 17—Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli met for the first time. The latter had just encountered his third defeat in High Wycombe, and was naturally not feeling in very good humour. The occasion was a dinner given by Lord Lyndhurst, the new Lord Chancellor, to Lord Abinger and the other Barons of the Exchequer. In a letter to his sister, Disraeli says there were also present George Dawson (a Tory Privy Councillor), Praed, "Young Gladstone," Sir M. Shee (President of the Royal Academy), Sir J. Beresford, and Admiral Pemberton. He adds that it was "rather dull." Mr. Gladstone seems to have carried away merely a general impression of his future rival's singular dress and appearance.

But the brief reign of Conservatism was coming to an end. It had been a period of useless struggle against a large majority, and of necessary and constant defeat. The King's action in dismissing Melbourne had, in fact, reacted disastrously upon the Tory party, and had revived for a while the fleeting strength of Whiggism. Mr. Gladstone had only time in his new post to make a favourable impression upon the permanent officials, to present a minor bill to the House dealing with the question of imported labour in the Colonies, and to make a few unimportant speeches, when the crash came. Lord John Russell, at the end of March, 1835, introduced further proposals concerning the property of the Irish Church, and, being carried against the Government by substantial majorities, there was no alternative but that of resignation. Lord Melbourne, therefore, re-assumed office, and succeeded in maintaining his position until the end of 1841.

Mr. Gladstone continued to take an active part in public affairs. During the June following his retirement from office, a dinner was given him by the Newark Tories, when he made a speech which appears almost fiery in its denunciation. "Gladstone and the Constitutional Cause" was emblazoned upon the chief banner of the occasion, and it was this cause which the guest proceeded to champion with all the vigour of a politician who is in Opposition and not immediately responsible for his words. O'Connell came in for considerable attention. "I do not think it expedient," declared Mr. Gladstone, "nor shall I enter into details of the exploits, character, and political opinions of that gentleman; I would rather say what I think of him in his presence than in his absence, because, unfortunately, I can say nothing of him but what is bad. This being the case, and the Government having a numerical majority, I say it possesses that majority only by truckling to the prejudices and passions of the mob, to men of violent revolutionary principles, and to reckless agitators."

He denied that the Tories were opposed to all reform, but declared that they did not want to sweep away institutions as well as abuses. He instanced the Irish Church, which he thought should be preserved "according to the principles of Protestantism." The separation of the Church of Ireland from the State "would be a sure step to the repeal of the Union, and, after that, the absolute dismemberment of the Empire." He therefore proposed, with enthusiasm, the toast of "the Union of Church and State." An interesting feature of the further proceedings was a speech from Mr. John Gladstone, who expressed his gratitude to the Almighty for having imbued the mind of his son "with those principles which had always governed his conduct, and which had grown with his youth and ripened with his maturer years."

During the ensuing session, Mr. Gladstone took high ground in support of the House of Lords. In reply to a construction put by O'Connell upon some action of the Government in connection with a financial measure, he declared that the Lords, as a body, were absolutely independent of the Commons, and "as capable of exercising a sound judgment." And he added that it was "indiscreet and indelicate" to anticipate their decision upon any given measure. Spring Rice, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at once replied, and challenged the member for Newark to justify the tendency of his Tory efforts "to draw a distinction between the obligations that Ministers owed to the Crown and those which they owed to the people." O'Connell, in following, declared Mr. Gladstone's doctrine to be "exceedingly slavish." Altogether, the debate was a hot one, and served to bring out the most ultra-Conservative side of the young politician's views.

A little later his mother died, and during the session of 1836 Mr. Gladstone did not appear prominently before the public. Curiously enough, when he did take part in the proceedings at Westminster, it was in a way calculated to "draw out" Lord John Russell, and resembled in its effect the famous policy of Lord Randolph Churchill towards Mr. Gladstone himself almost half a century afterwards. Upon one occasion, Russell, in his chill and icy manner, observed that "the mode of proceeding adopted by the honourable gentleman is completely at variance from what hitherto has been the usage of this House." An interesting incident of this year was his visit to Liverpool for the purpose of assisting his old school-friend, Charles Canning, who proposed to contest that great constituency. On October 18th he attended a banquet, and in the course of his speech dwelt upon the Established Church in England and in Ireland as "A valuable institution, because it conduces more than any other to the stability of the country, to its peace, and to its prosperity, but which also we regard in a more sacred light as the appointed dispenser, and as the most faithful steward, of the truth of God." Three days later, at another dinner, he declared that the Conservatives, in favouring the rights of the people, did not believe in "those wild theoretical rights which deluged the country with blood." They believed in neither despotism nor democracy, but in a happy mean between the two. Early in the following January Peel made a great speech in Glasgow, and Gladstone delivered another strong Tory address. He characterized O'Connell as "a man by whose reckless wickedness a great proportion of the Irish people were misled, much to their own and to our debasement," and spoke of the time as being one suited to the formation of a National Party, "united in the great and holy cause" of maintaining the Church and the institutions of the country. It appears to have been a most eloquent speech, and the London *Standard*, in dealing with it, editorially referred to the "splendid talents" of the speaker.

Shortly afterwards he arrived at Newark, and just in time to be present at a dinner given to the Earl of Lincoln. Here he once more urged the formation of a National Party, declaring that "the time had come for a union of men to support, at all hazards and through all dangers, the Church, the

Monarchy, and the Peerage." His oratory seems to have made a most vivid impression upon this occasion, and it is interesting to note that only three years before Disraeli had enunciated the same desire for a national party, and was still destined to follow it up for a lengthy period, in speech, and essay, and novel. In 1887, and again in 1894, Mr. Chamberlain broached the same idea; but, though beautiful in theory, it has never yet been found workable in practice. During the session of 1837, Mr. Gladstone took part in too many important debates to make description possible. He showed great interest in Canadian affairs, and this will be referred to again; and he continued his vigorous defence of all Church interests.

While, however, his progress continued to be very marked, it was hampered in these and following years by the ominous cloud of slavery and its consequences. By the Emancipation Act of 1833, the slaves in the West Indies had nominally been freed, and, out of the immense sum awarded Colonial planters as compensation, John Gladstone and his family had received something like $450,000. But the freedom of the negroes was largely nominal, and both in Jamaica and Demerara they continued to be worked and treated in much the same manner as before. Indeed, under the apprenticeship clause of the Act, they were compelled to give three-fourths of their time to their former owners for seven years. Reports continued to reach the Anti-Slavery Society of cruelties practised, of the flogging of women as well as men, and of the many hardships still suffered by the unfortunate blacks. In 1836, a committee had been appointed to inquire into the system, and Mr. Gladstone was one of its members. Their report, upon the whole, was not unfavourable to apprenticeship, but it certainly did not satisfy the abolitionists, who continued to maintain that the new condition of the slaves was as bad as the old.

Meantime, John Gladstone had complicated matters by importing from India, under permission of the Board of Control, 150 coolies, whom he put to work upon his plantations in both Jamaica and Demerara. This was virtually slavery re-established, and when fresh and, it must be admitted, truthful reports came of renewed hardships upon the Gladstone and other estates Parliament took the matter up. Mr. Gladstone was never behind-hand in defending his father, and his speech in 1838 upon the general question of slavery and the apprenticeship system was declared by a listener to be "the ablest speech he ever made in the House, and by far the ablest on that side of the question." But the cause was doomed, and the day long past for any practical and successful opposition to the policy of negro freedom in the true and full sense of the word. A few months after this apparently triumphant speech in the House, the last remnant of slavery was done away with by the abolition of the apprenticeship system, and, aside from efforts to modify the slave trade on the coasts and the interior of Africa, Mr. Gladstone's connection with it was over.

None the less, slavery had exercised a malign influence over this period of his life, and, although there were easily two sides to the question, and it remains impossible not to admire the pluck with which the young politician took the unpopular side and stood by his father through thick and thin, it is yet difficult to see how his sympathetic and impressionable nature could have permitted him to consistently and continuously defend the planter against the slave. The only possible explanation, and, no doubt, the true one, is to be found in the nature of his home environment. From his earliest years he had been taught to see no harm in slavery; to regard it as enjoined and permitted by the Scriptures; to see it as a part of his father's business, and its results a portion of his daily life. Hence, what now seems so strange an anomaly in the career of William Ewart Gladstone, and one which, no doubt, influenced his subsequent remarkable course in the American Civil War.

Meanwhile, important personal and other events were taking place. In 1833, the young member for Newark had been elected a member of the Carlton Club, then, as now, representing the most ultra true-blue Toryism. In 1839, he finally abandoned his early intention of being called to the Bar, and, his political future being now apparently assured, had his name taken off the rolls of Lincoln's Inn. His work on Church and State had been published in the preceding year and variously received, while, in 1839, he had devoted much time to the improvement of national education, but always with a view to the influence and work of the Church of England. The condition of the country during these years was very wretched. Poverty appeared to be rampant, and had become more and more aggressive, until, in 1838, the Chartists enunciated their famous Six Points of reform in the name, as they claimed, of the people of England. This demand for manhood suffrage, equal electoral districts, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, no property qualification for members, and the payment of members of Parliament, seemed then, naturally, to involve revolution. Now, they are subjects for free discussion and consideration. It is not difficult, however, to understand the Tory fear of such ideas when their advocacy was accompanied by stormy mass meetings, riots, incendiarism, revolutionary language, and threats against every prevailing interest in the country.

The young Queen's growing popularity had, however, prevented these movements and disturbances from promoting genuine disloyalty, and her marriage, in 1840, by introducing to the country a new and wise personality, still further helped the throne. And, incidentally, it brought Mr. Gladstone into contact with Prince Albert, and marked the commencement of an appreciation which culminated later in those papers upon the Prince Consort's life and work which form so valuable a contribution to British constitutional literature.

During these first years in Parliament Mr. Gladstone had steadily established himself in politics, but it was in a position of great peculiarity. He had shown a consistent tendency to put the Church first in everything, and his work upon the union of State and Church is so important a landmark in his career as to demand separate treatment, and to make it necessary to postpone for a space the further consideration of his political development. In that, however, he had shown, in the language of Bishop Wilberforce, that there was no height to which he could not fairly rise.

CHARLES, EARL GREY.

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1830-34.

JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY, FIRST LORD LYNDHURST,

Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, 1827-30, 1835, 1841-6.

CHAPTER VI.

A CHAMPION OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

MR. GLADSTONE has always possessed an ecclesiastical mind and temperament. Religion to him has appeared not only as a living reality and powerful influence in everyday existence, but as a great factor in the control of nations, and the administration of public affairs. The science of government, involving, as it should, the care and direction of the best and highest interests of humanity, ought, he believed, to necessarily include the offices of religion and the recognition of Christianity. To try to develop the interests of a nation in laws and commerce, in arts and arms, and attempt at the same time to exclude religion from affairs of State, meant the absence of the only element which could ensure vitality and permanence to the progress which might be effected.

He has, therefore, been an enthusiastic believer in the union of Church and State. He was, in early years, emphatically a Churchman first, and a Conservative afterwards. The real bent of his mind at Oxford had been towards a career of religious work, and ecclesiastical administration. And there is little doubt that he would have preferred the Archbishopric of Canterbury, as an object of personal ambition, to the Premiership of England. Failing, however, to follow up this particular drift of inclination, he became a pronounced and prominent supporter of the Church in all public matters, wrote and spoke in the cause of State recognition of religion, and naturally fell under the spell and influence of that wonderful movement which—commencing about 1833—ended in the revival of the Christian power of the Church of England, and the loss of the great minds of Manning and Newman from amongst its adherents.

Mr. Gladstone's whole theory and principle at this time rested upon the simple proposition that religion being the most beneficial and noble element in the life of humanity, the government of a State, as representing a certain portion of the world's population, is bound by the most sacred and vital obligations to formally recognize Christianity through a constitutional union with some given Church. Speaking in the House of Commons, on March 31st, 1835, the young member expressed his view of the general subject with sufficient energy and force:

> "If, hereafter, the consideration of religion—the most vital of all subjects to our permanent happiness and advancement—be excluded from the attention of Government;

if, on the other hand, they are compelled to view with equal interest or indifference all modes of faith, to confound together every form of truth and every strange variety of error, to deal with circumstantial and essential differences as being alike matters of no concern, to refuse their homage to the divine authority of truth; then, so far from the science of politics being, as the greatest philosophers of antiquity fondly proclaimed it, the queen and mistress of all other arts, and discharging the noblest functions of the mind, it will be an occupation degrading in its practice and fitted rather for the very helots of society."

The condition of the Established Church at this period was deplorable. The hunting and swearing parson was quite an ordinary personage, and neither appreciation of the truths of Christianity nor the practise of its precepts seemed to be thought essential in many of the appointments made within the Church. Bishops too often neglected their duties, and allowed their dioceses to lack both administration and proper teaching. Churches were allowed to fall into ruin, church-yards into a disgraceful condition, and even the spiritual offices of the Church not infrequently came into actual disrepute. Many, of course, there were who, amid difficulties and despondency, held aloft the light and life of pure religion; but, to a lamentably great extent, dull formalism, indifferent preaching, and bad example, had injured the influence and prestige of the National Church.

Here was the opportunity for Nonconformity; here was a cause for great grief to sincere lovers of the Church, such as Mr. Gladstone and many of his closest friends; here also was a condition which involved disaster to the Establishment—inevitable and serious—unless some change came over the deadened surface of the system. But it was, in reality, the darkness before the dawn. At a moment when the enthusiasm and work, which should and must characterize a great Church, were at their lowest ebb, came the movement which was destined to transform the whole inner life and outward labours of the national religious institution. Half a dozen brilliant and noble-minded men at Oxford started the Catholic revival, which, like a beacon light upon a hill in times of war, seemed to meet with a responsive flame of effort and zeal in every portion of the country.

Headed by Newman, and helped by Manning, the appeal voiced in the famous "Tracts for the Times" permeated England with a new power, and inspired the friends of the Church to fresh and greater exertions. Mr. Gladstone was neither weak in his defence, nor behind in his efforts. He did not hesitate to put himself again and again upon record. Speaking in the House towards the close of the session, in 1835, he denounced the Government's proposed grant of £25,000 to provide for the religious and moral instruction of the emancipated negroes in the West Indies, on the ground that all sects were to be placed upon an equal basis. Responding to ironical cheers from some Whig members, he went on: "I am alive to the meaning of that cheer; but, though well aware that the principle of a Church establishment is not a popular one on that side of the House, I, upon the other hand, believe it to be intimately interwoven with the welfare and greatness of my country; and I am, therefore, incapable of being deterred from the expression of such a sentiment by any taunt or sarcasm."

And the time was now coming for him to do that thing which of all others is most dangerous for a politician—the writing of a book in defence of some particular view or institution. Impelled by love for his Church; urged on by strong religious convictions; impressed by the progress of the Tractarian movement, he commenced, in 1838, to write his famous work upon "The State in its Relations with the Church." It was while engaged upon this congenial theme that he received a letter from Samuel Wilberforce, which that afterwards distinguished prelate could well be proud of having penned. "It would be an affectation in you, which you are above," he wrote, "not to know that few young men have the weight you have in the House of Commons, and are gaining rapidly throughout the country. Now, I do not wish to urge you to consider this as a talent, for your use of which you must render an account, for so I know you do esteem it; but what I want to urge upon you is that you should calmly look far before you; see the degree and weight of influence to which you may fairly, if God spares your life and powers, look forward in future years, and thus act *now* with a view to *then*. There is no height to which you may not fairly rise in this country. . . . You may at a future day wield the whole Government of this land; and, if this should be so, of what extreme moment will your past steps then be to the real usefulness of your high station. . . . I would have you view yourself as one who may become the head of all the better feelings of this country, the maintainer of its Church and of its liberties."

To this letter from one who was as good and saintly a man as he in later days became a great ecclesiastic, Mr. Gladstone replied at considerable length. It was a rather pessimistic and doubtful epistle. The probable destiny of the nation was one to which he looked forward with "despondency and alarm"; the avenues of life were sometimes viewed by him with "weakness of faith and shrinking of the flesh." New developments of religious power appeared indeed to be "providentially reserved for the time of our need, for the swelling of Jordan"; beyond that period, for those who were appointed to it, there lay a haven of perfect rest. But still the coming years bore an aspect of gloom for the country—not for the Church; "she is the land of Goshen." Looking to the State as such, he seemed "unable to discern resources bearing a just proportion to her dangers and responsibilities." There appeared to him to be a falling away in the intellectual stature of the men who were in command, or available for command, in the political arena. Public men were called upon to do more and more, while through all the vista of accumulating duties and multiplied details, there seemed every indication of a capacity to do less and less. The principles of civil government had "decayed as much as those which are ecclesiastical," and an equally ready or sure provision for their revival did not appear on the horizon. The groundwork of the national character was threatened, and the enlightened principle needed for resistance was "yet to be organized, almost to be created."

And it was with these feelings and forebodings that the young politician entered upon his first literary work of public importance. After a period devoted to preparation, and some time spent in correspondence with James R. Hope, whose acute perception and love for the Church were placed most fully at his disposal, the book was issued by John Murray in December, 1838. It occupied 324 pages, and was divided into eight chapters, which dealt with the many questions connected with or surrounding the one central idea of State and Church unity. The author treated of the published and much-discussed theories of Hooker and Warburton, Paley and Chalmers, Bellarmine and the Ultramontanes. He handled the general principle of State connection, and traced its influence upon personal religion within the Establishment. He explained the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Sovereign in England, and dealt with the Reformation and its effects upon the union of the modern Church with the State. He concluded with a general argument to the effect that the country benefited more than the Church by the union, and in exact proportion to the strength, efficiency, and permanence of the connection.

The work was dedicated to the University of Oxford, "in the belief that she is providentially designed to be a fountain of blessings, spiritual, social, and intellectual, to this and to other countries, to the present and future times." It really embodied the revival of enthusiasm and work in the Church itself, and endeavoured to give a substantial logical basis for the union, from which so much good was at the moment expected, and has since undoubtedly come. Mr. Gladstone thus summarized his chief reasons for supporting the maintenance of a Church Establishment:

> "Because the Government stands with us in a paternal relation to the people, and is bound in all things to consider not merely their existing tastes, but the capabilities and ways of their improvement; because to be in accordance with God's mind and will it must have a religion; and because to be in accordance with its conscience that religion must be the truth, as held by it under the most solemn and accumulated responsibilities; because this is the only sanctifying and preserving principle of society, as well as to the individual, that particular benefit without which all others are worse than valueless. We must disregard the din of political contention, and the pressure of worldly and momentary motives, and in behalf of our regard to man, as well as of our allegiance to God, maintain among ourselves, where happily it still exists, the union between the Church and the State.

Applying his theory to the Irish Church question, he admitted the difficulties of the situation and the dominance of a Church which represented only a very small percentage of the people. But he claimed that these conditions could not alter the duty of the Government to give to Ireland a recognized State religion, and declared that the Imperial legislature was "qualified to take, and has taken, in point of fact, a sounder view of religious truth than the majority of the people of Ireland, in their destitute and uninstructed state." In addition, the national duty being so clear in a religious sense, he maintained that it was equally evident in a political sense. His argument was, in brief, that a separation of the Church from the State would, in this case, help to sever Ireland from England. "A common form of faith," observed the author, "binds the Irish Protestants to ourselves, while they, upon the other hand, are fast linked to Ireland; and thus they supply the most natural bond of connection between the countries."

Mr. Gladstone thus advanced in his work a very lofty theory regarding the general duty of a State towards religion. Over and over again, he emphasized this obligation. In one place, he declared that the powers that dwell in individuals acting as a government, as well as those that dwell in individuals acting for themselves, can only be secured for right uses by applying to them a religion. In another place, he pointed out that a government is simply the agent of a people or nation, and that there must consequently be attached to this agency, as something without which none of our responsibilities can be properly met, a religion. "And this religion must be that of the conscience of the governor, or none." Here, indeed, was a wide and arbitrary conception. Then, again, he claimed that a nation having a personality "lies under the obligation, like the individuals composing its governing body, of sanctifying the acts of that personality by the offices of religion."

The reception given to this strong appeal for a State Church was various, and the opinions conflicting. Lord Houghton tells us that Sir Robert Peel looked upon it with all the regret and fear of a politician, who knows that such an action is generally injurious to a public man, and that, after a hasty survey of its contents, he threw the volume on the floor of his library, with the remark: "That young man will ruin his fine political career if he persists in writing trash like this." The first review of the *Times* was not only favourable, but eulogistic, and declared that "the author has acquitted himself with transcendent ability throughout, and has produced, indeed, one of the most profound, eloquent, and unanswerable demonstrations that we ever remember to have read." But a more careful examination apparently alarmed that paper, and in another notice on January 4th, 1839, it came out with a fierce attack upon Mr. Gladstone as a follower of Dr. Pusey and his associates in their "anti-Protestant movement"; as being irrecoverably contaminated with "these new-fangled Oxford bigotries"; and as having exhibited his "Popish bias" most distinctly, In a fourth article it warmed still more to the subject, and declared the author's views to be "a tame dilution of Romanism."

Naturally, Newman, amongst many others, did not appreciate this attack, and on January 14th wrote to Frederic Rogers, "What a fine fellow Gladstone is!"; and a few days later declared that "I feel as if I could do anything for him." Sir Henry (then Mr.) Taylor, and a very competent literary critic, wrote to Southey that he was reading the new book. "It is," he observed, "closely and deeply argumentative, perhaps too much in the nature of a series of propositions and corollaries for a book which takes so very demonstrative a character. But it is most able and most profound, and written in language which cannot be excelled for solidity and clearness." He then referred to the possibility of Gladstone one day being at the head of the Government, which was even then being discussed, and went on to make a statement which now seems very amusing, that "want of robust health and want of flexibility" might interfere with such a prospect.

Taylor, in another private letter, has given us a glimpse of the general opinion concerning the work: "Some people say it is crazy and nonsensical; others, that it will ruin him in political life; many, that it is bigoted and papistical." Sir James Stephen described it to the same writer as "A book of great majesty, dignity, and strength." Wordsworth, and more than one other friendly critic, thought it lacked clearness, but deemed the work "worthy of all attention." James (afterwards Professor) Mozley declared it "a very noble book," but thought that by it Gladstone had sacrificed his political chances. Bunsen, the Prussian Minister, was very enthusiastic. "It is," he declared, "the book of the time; a great event—the first book since Burke that goes to the bottom of the vital question. . . . Gladstone is the first man in England as to intellectual power." But it was Macaulay's essay, in the *Edinburgh Review*, which has made the work famous, and kept it, in later times, from drifting into absolute desuetude.

Macaulay wrote his criticism from a friendly personal standpoint, but from an opposing political one. In sending the article to the editor of the *Review*, he mentioned having met Mr. Gladstone very recently in Rome, and declared him to be "both a clever and an amiable man." In the essay, he treated the author with every possible respect; referred to him as "rising to eminence in the House of Commons"; as being a young man of "unblemished character and distinguished Parliamentary talents"; and, in conclusion, expressed admiration for his talents and respect for his integrity and benevolence. But the central point of the article, and the remark that has been quoted on ten thousand platforms and in myriads of other places, was his reference to Mr. Gladstone as "the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow, reluctantly and mutinously, a leader (Peel) whose experience and eloquence are indespensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor."

This simple sentence has made both the book and the article historic, aside altogether from Macaulay's able confutation of Gladstone's arguments, and the interesting side-light which the work itself throws upon the latter's views, position, and subsequent career. The criticism is very severe. In one place Macaulay observes that "whatever Mr. Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false medium of passions and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable analogy to his mode of thinking, and indeed exercises great influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic which it should illustrate. Half his acuteness and diligence, with a barren imagination and a scant vocabulary, would have saved him from almost all his mistakes. He has one gift most dangerous to a speculator, a vast command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and uncertain import."

The author's theory that the propagation of religious truth is one of the principal duties of a Government receives not only contradiction, but the keenest kind of analysis. If, it is pointed out, unity of will, pervading sympathies, and capability of reward and suffering constitute, as Mr. Gladstone claims, a sufficient collective basis for religious observation and religious responsibility, then every army should have an established religion, and every corporation, every organized union for common interests, is entitled to force a test and a religious principle upon its individual numbers. Then Macaulay deals with the statement that the conscience of the governor should decide the State religion, and asks how many of even the greatest rulers have been fitted for such a power. "Take, for example," he says, "the best French sovereign, Henry the Fourth, a king who restored order, terminated a terrible civil war, brought the finances into an excellent condition, and endeared himself to the great body of the people whom he ruled. Yet this man was twice a Huguenot and twice a Papist. Take the Czar Peter, the Empress Catharine, Frederick the Great. It will surely not be disputed that these sovereigns were, if we consider them with reference merely to the temporal ends of government, above the average of merit. Considered as theological guides, Mr. Gladstone would probably put them below the most abject drivellers of the Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon." And in this way Macaulay continued his masterly critique of the work in all its departments.

But strong as the criticism was, it came to the subject so mellowed by kindly personal expression, and by the evident desire to be just, that Mr. Gladstone at once wrote the reviewer in warm terms, saying, amongst other things, that "in these lacerating times one clings to everything of personal kindness in the past to husband it for the future; and, if you will allow me, I shall earnestly desire to carry with me a recollection of your mode of dealing with a subject upon which the attainment of truth, we shall agree, so materially depends upon the temper in which the search for it is instituted and conducted." Further reference to contemporary opinion of the book is hardly necessary, but exception may be made in favour of that eminent Churchman, Frederick Denison Maurice, who expressed disappointment; of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, who liked part of it, but naturally—with his different Church views—disliked the other part; and of Carlyle, who spoke of the author as "a solid, serious, silent-minded man." Generally speaking, the work satisfied no political or ecclesiastical school of thought. Nearly every one admitted its ability, but Whig and Tory, Low Churchman and Puseyite, alike, differed from some of its conclusions. Mr. Gladstone's theory was, in fact, too pronounced for popular acceptance, too dogmatic for individual adhesion. The Established Church, indeed, as he afterwards clearly demonstrated in Ireland, is not based upon the logical application of pure theory, but upon various practical and effective principles drawn from national growths and national needs.

But nothing daunted by the mingled reception given to his first effort, Mr. Gladstone, in 1840, published a second contribution to the study of the subject: "Church Principles Considered in their Results." His argument in this volume was a very elaborate one. He attempted to present in practical form the various doctrines of the Church, including those relating to the apostolical succession in the ministry, the authority of the Church in matters of faith, and its position in regard to the sacraments. He also attempted to show the effect of these principles in the relations borne by Anglicans to each other and to opposing communions. It was emphatically a theological treatise, and for this reason Macaulay declined to review the book, although at first intending to do so. Apart from being a minute study of Church doctrines, it showed some slight leanings towards religious union and religious liberality, the author contending that comprehensiveness of communion and liberty of thought were the prime conditions for the efficacy of Christianity.

But this renewed attempt to blend the teacher and the politician was not popular. The press paid little attention to the work, with the exception of the *Spectator*, which summed it up as "essentially Romish"; and even personal friends received it coldly. The fact of the matter was that while the author wrote from a High Church standpoint, and thus displeased the Low Churchmen, he at the same time opposed the movement towards Rome, then becoming visible amongst many of his old-time friends, and thus displeased the other section. In a work which is criticized, for instance, by the *Spectator*, as being Romish in character, he asks: "England, which with ill grace and ceaseless efforts at remonstrance, endured the yoke when Rome was in her zenith, and when the powers of thought were but here and there evoked—will the same

England, afraid of the truth which she has vindicated, recur to that system in its decrepitude which she repudiated in its vigour?"

Mr. Gladstone was now in the flowing tide of the Tractarian or Oxford movement. His books had been the natural product of much religious thought; his political views the outcome of a mind centred upon the Church rather than the world. This famous movement, to which incidental reference has already been made, was destined to have most important results, in some of which Mr. Gladstone sympathized; from some of which he greatly differed. Writing in 1843, in an article which was afterwards reproduced in the "Gleanings of Past Years," he has described the birth of this remarkable Church revival:

> "Four or five clergymen of the University of Oxford met together (in 1833), alarmed at the course of Parliamentary legislation with respect to the Church; at the very menacing and formidable attitude of Dissent in its alliance with political liberalism; and at the disposition manifested in the Establishment itself to tamper with the distinctive principles of its formularies. They met in private, and resolved to make an effort to revive, not the doctrines, but the lively reception and impression of the doctrines, which relate to the visibility, perpetuity, and authority of the Church of Christ, and to the spiritual essence of her ministry and ordinances. The series of publications called the 'Tracts for the Times' were the first fruits of that meeting."

With this movement to revive the spiritual influence of the Church; to reform administrative abuses; to check the growing disgrace of non-resident clergymen, plural benefices, and diverse teachings as to sacraments, Mr. Gladstone heartily sympathized and worked. His associations with Manning and Newman, with Pusey and J. R. Hope, became more and more intimate. His religious feelings were deeply stirred by the eloquence of the distinguished divines, and his correspondence in those days shows how strong the effect really was. Meantime the wave of revival swept over the Church, and, while it strengthened the Christian character of its work, at the same time built up its national influence. Abuses were remedied, the standing and character of the clergy improved, parishes became alive with active labour, the poor were looked after with energy and zeal, and the membership and influence of the Church was gradually, but steadily, extended.

So far the movement had worked nothing but good. Unfortunately, however, the asceticism of Newman and the enthusiasm of Manning carried them to extremes. Christian doctrine was to them based upon Church authority, as it was to many High Churchmen of that day, and is still, but they carried the principle to its logical conclusion, and claimed ultimately to find in the Roman Catholic Church the mother of modern Christianity and the great authority upon all matters of faith. The conviction did not come at once, but only after long and apparently severe and stormy mental struggles. It was, no doubt, assisted by temperament, and by the discipline of daily life and strict self-denial which they inaugurated. But whatever the causes, the result soon became inevitable.

It was during the time of preliminary suspicion concerning the ultimate destination of many of those participating in this movement that Mr. Gladstone's books had appeared. Hence the bitter onslaughts of Low Church papers like the *Times*, and the effect of his arguments upon individual opinions such as those of Arnold or Maurice, Wilberforce or Selwyn. The Oxford movement, in fact, seems ultimately to have had two effects and two channels of effort. The one looked to the extension of the forms of sacrament of the Church of England so as to bring it into harmony, if possible, with the Roman Church, from which it was said to have originally sprung, and resulted, in 1851, in the reception of Manning, Newman, and thousands of their adherents, into the Church of Rome. The other aimed at elevating the authority of the Church of England as such; increasing the purity and efficiency of its work; and making more sacred and effective its historic Christian sacraments. It resulted in a genuine and powerful good to the Church which no development of Ritualism or subsequent tendency to Romanism could ever undo.

Fortunately for himself and the Establishment, Mr. Gladstone stood with the latter element, and struggled for the independent existence and improvement of the Anglican communion. Writing Dean Wilberforce, on December 24th, 1844, and while these movements were working within the Church, he declared that "the fabric consolidates itself more and more, even while the earthquake rocks it; for, with a thousand drawbacks and deductions, love grows larger, zeal warmer, truth firmer among us." He was still at this time, and remained for some years longer, a most prominent champion of the union between Church and State. Theory and religious enthusiasm continued uppermost in his mind and advocacy until the Corn Law controversy and political promotion and power gave him other and very different subjects to treat of.

When that time came, theory gradually gave way to the necessities of the day, and the student of theological questions stood finally transformed by circumstances into the commercial administrator and the practical politician.

CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL EVOLUTION AND THE FREE TRADE MOVEMENT.

As the years rolled on, Mr. Gladstone continued to grow in party approval, in popular esteem, and in Parliamentary influence. Everything, indeed, seemed to be in his favour, unless it were the delicate, hair-splitting conscientiousness which sometimes appeared so out of place in public life, and which, a few years later, showed itself so clearly in connection with Maynooth and the Catholic endowment question. Not only did Conservatives generally endorse Macaulay's description of him as the hope of his party in days to come, but outside opinion placed him amongst the most rapidly rising young men in the House.

Though not yet forty years of age, he had held the minor Governmental offices which are needed to pave the way to higher place and position ; he had won a good, though not great, reputation in literature ; he had shown himself well informed in the subjects which required attention at the hands of Parliament, and appeared able and willing, whenever a fit occasion arose, to defend and support his party. In debate, he had proved the possession of ample resources in language and knowledge. Speaking seemed to cost him but little effort, and his style was at once polished and plausible. Many of his contemporaries, however, while they recognized his talents and abilities, do not seem to have considered them as extraordinary or even remarkable. James Grant, writing in 1838, declared that he had no idea that Mr. Gladstone would "ever acquire the reputation of a great statesman," and gave as a reason for his belief the statement that "his views are not sufficiently profound or enlarged." But every one admitted his readiness as a debater, the growing eloquence of his elocution, and the charm of his manner.

A most interesting description of him was given in the winter of 1840 by the *Britannia*, a weekly Conservative organ. It was one of a series of sketches of the prominent politicians of the day, and, by way of introduction, contained a description of the style of speaking then required for marked success in Parliament, from which it is possible to appreciate Mr. Gladstone's own mournful remarks of fifty years afterwards upon the decadence of dignity and sincerity in that great assembly. In the House of Commons, at that time, it seems that the kind of speaker who most surely earned the respect and regard of its members was he who approached his subject with reverential earnestness, and showed by the simplicity of his diction and the sincerity of his manner that he recognized "a more stern duty and a higher aim than that of merely talking down to their interests, or appealing to their prejudices and passions."

Mr. Gladstone naturally came up to this lofty level of requirement. He was, above all things, conscientious and earnest. Trifling he could not understand, jesting he could never appreciate, and during these years he appeared as the high-minded advocate of principles which every one could honour, even though they might not believe in or follow them. Great expectations had been formed of him, and, according to this strong Tory organ, "He at once stamped himself as a man of a very high order of intellect, and also as having entered Parliament the sworn champion of principles from which no consideration would induce him to swerve." The critic then proceeded to analyze the powers and methods of the speaker in a way which must have been more than interesting to those who, years afterwards, heard the financier rise to the loftiest heights of eloquence in delivering his great budget speeches, or the Liberal leader exhausting his almost illimitable resources of denunciation and declamation in the memorable campaign against the Turks.

Mr. Gladstone, it appears, was not to be considered a brilliant speaker, his physical powers as an orator being of an insignificant kind. His voice was unfortunately weak, though very mild and musical. It was especially adapted "for persuasion and quiet argument, or for the expression of that subdued earnestness which results from deep religious feeling." It was scarcely fitted for the stormy functions of a public speaker, though it insensibly enchained the attention of the House whenever heard. Here we recognize an element of his growing influence. "The charm of his style consists in the earnestness and sincerity of his manner, his evident conviction of the importance of the truths which he is uttering, and, above all, the mild, gentlemanly humility with which he offers the result of his deep and secluded thinking, to the world."

The writer goes on to compliment the young politician upon the high and noble ground taken in his speeches—especially in those upon Church questions. "Were there more Mr. Gladstone's, there might be fewer Dissenters," he declares, with evident truthfulness, and then sums up the subject of his sketch as "a man of no ordinary kind; his mind is cast in no common mould. Had he physical powers commensurate with his intellectual endowments, he would become a first-rate public man, for he has those essential qualities of greatness—strength of mind and sincerity of purpose." The apparent accuracy of this pen-picture—the *Britannia*, November 7th, 1840—is increased by the wonderful development of physical endurance which the world has since admired in Mr. Gladstone, and its interest is heightened when one thinks of the student-like politician with the intellectual face, and "short, stealthy, stooping gait," transformed into the intensely active party leader of half a century—the Prime Minister who, when verging upon eighty years of age, could throw down the gauntlet of defiance on behalf of a new Irish policy and a new political creed, in the teeth of dissatisfied friends and a doubtful nation.

But a stormy political period was now approaching, and one which may be said to have given birth to both Gladstone and Disraeli as national characters. Bright and Cobden naturally rode into the harbour of popular acclaim upon the waves of the Free Trade movement, while Mr. Gladstone was destined to win his first financial success in manipulating the details of the great change, and Mr. Disraeli to fight his way to the front by the characteristic brilliance and bitterness of his attacks upon Sir Robert Peel. Like the times preceding the Reform Bill of 1832, this was a season of suffering, riot, and discontent.

In the beginning of the forties, it was hard to see where any fiscal reform was to come from. Parties and politicians, leaders and followers, were alike opposed to the repeal of the Corn Laws. Lord Melbourne, the Whig Premier, had declared in the House of Commons, in 1839, that "to leave the whole agricultural interest without protection, I declare before God, I think the wildest and maddest scheme that it has ever entered the imagination of man to conceive." Two years later the House was dissolved, and the Tories came into office with a Parliamentary majority of ninety, and an apparently prolonged lease of power in sight. Modifications in the law were, it is true, made from time to time, but the principle of protection, exaggerated as a modern protectionist must conceive it to have been, was practically unaffected. It was, indeed, more in the nature of prohibition than protection, as the latter word is understood in the present day.

Everything obtainable from abroad was forced to pay a more or less heavy duty. There was no discrimination in favour of this manufacturer or against that particular foreign interest. All products alike were taxed—outside of certain Colonial arrangements—upon entering the country, and, whether raw material or the finished article, they were treated in exactly the same manner. Thousands of items, therefore, came under the dutiable heading, and the tariff list of the time has been accurately described as forming a tolerably complete dictionary of all the products of human industry. Mr. Gladstone's attitude upon the question had been that of his party. During the early course of his Parliamentary life he had consistently opposed rash changes or hasty legislation in fiscal matters, as he would have resisted them in any other branch of politics or statecraft.

In 1834 he was one of the large majority of two to one which had voted down Hume's proposed Committee upon the Corn Laws. In 1837 he opposed a motion for a fixed and lower duty instead of a sliding scale of rates. At a meeting in Manchester during the elections of the same year, one of his opponents declared that Mr. Gladstone had never aided in the movement for the repeal of the Corn Laws, and that he had no claim whatever to consideration as a commercial reformer. Even as late as 1843, and after the first instalment of reduced duties had been in operation for a year, he vigorously resisted the annual motion of Mr. Villiers:

> "That the House should resolve itself into a committee for the purpose of considering the duties affecting the importation of foreign corn, with the view to their immediate abolition."

In speaking to this motion he deprecated any further change in the laws, pointed to the danger of American competition, referred to the existing low price of corn, and expressed the fear that further reductions would increase the drain of gold to the United States. During the next year he opposed a motion of Mr. Cobden's, for "inquiry into the effects of protective duties on agricultural tenants and labourers."

Meantime, however, personal and political changes had occurred which placed Mr. Gladstone upon an inclined plane towards free trade, made him a medium for substantial steps in that direction, and prepared his mind, as well as that of Sir Robert Peel, for the final and complete plunge. In 1841 the troubles thickening around the Whig Ministry culminated in the failure of an effort by Lord John Russell to deal with the duties on wheat, and the passage of a vote of non-confidence proposed by Sir Robert Peel. Parliament was at once dissolved, and the elections resulted in a Tory majority of over eighty. Mr. Gladstone was re-elected for Newark, together with Lord John Manners, then and afterwards the intimate friend and follower of Disraeli. This was, of course, a gain for the Conservatives, and gave Mr. Gladstone a colleague who is now, as Duke of Rutland, one of the few survivors of those early political struggles.

On August 30th, Peel was called upon to form a Ministry, and immediately offered his young lieutenant the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade. Gladstone was somewhat disappointed, as it seems he had hoped for the Irish Secretaryship, with a seat in the Cabinet. But he accepted the post, which was gilded with a Privy Councillorship and the additional position of Master of the Mint. As it turned out, the place was of almost providential value to him, and commenced the process of developing the religious theorist—who had been described only a year before this, when presenting prizes at Eton, as "an apostle of unworldly ardour"—into a practical financier. Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) recognized this possibility at the time, and in a letter to Guizot, then Prime Minister of France, pointed out that while the position was not very distinguished in itself, the large place which the Corn Laws filled in public and political interests had given it "a great importance, and will give him great and frequent means of displaying his fine abilities."

Guizot was naturally interested in the intelligence, as he had during the previous year, when acting as French Ambassador in London, entertained Mr. Gladstone at dinner, and given John Stuart Mill a much-desired opportunity of meeting the member for Newark. Some ten years later, his greatest rival, Thiers, was dined in London, and amongst the other guests were Mr. Gladstone, Henry Hallam, Bulwer Lytton, Sidney Herbert, Cardwell and Abraham Hayward. The latter, in afterwards analyzing the conversational powers of Thiers and Gladstone, who seem to have pretty well monopolized the talk upon this occasion, declared in favour of the Englishman, despite the fact that much of the conversation was carried on in French. About this time, Mr. Gladstone also met Dr. Dollinger, a distinguished German divine, who seems to have afterwards exercised considerable modifying influence over the statesman's theological views.

In the autumn of this year, Church circles were disturbed by various questions connected with the appointment of an Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem. The proposal was not palatable to the Newman wing of the High Church party, and hence the interest which attaches to Mr. Gladstone's support of the moderate school in this case. At a dinner given by Baron Bunsen he had spoken on the subject, and the Baron, in a letter shortly afterwards, observes, "Never was heard a more exquisite speech. It flowed like a gentle and translucent stream." For some time afterwards, Mr. Gladstone continued to take part in the discussion, and, amidst all his public business, carried on a correspondence about it which, he declared himself upon one occasion and in a private letter, "to almost reel and stagger under."

Meanwhile events were moving rapidly in a fiscal direction. The Anti-Corn Law League had become, under the leadership of Villiers and Cobden Bright and W. J. Fox, a power in the land. Yet it had not materially affected the elections of 1841. Both parties in that year, and for some time later, were opposed to absolute repeal, and to the free traders the fixed duty of Lord John Russell was as objectionable as the sliding scale proposed by Sir Robert Peel. The idea of free trade remained simply an abstraction to the great mass of the members of Parliament, though it was assuming distinct form and shape in Peel's reserved and reticent mind. And, theoretically, he was, perhaps, already in sympathy with the general principle, as was Mr. Gladstone, though both hesitated to apply it in logical fulness, especially to that great staple of the country—wheat. The latter, in fact, had declared at Newark during his re-election upon taking office that "the farmers might rely upon adequate protection" for their products.

But the condition of the country in 1842 made a first important step towards free trade inevitable. There was an anticipated deficit of nearly fourteen million dollars, and the limit of taxation upon articles of consumption and import seemed clearly to have been reached. The condition of the people, as voiced in the Chartist troubles and popular depressions of the previous years, was lamentable, and although Disraeli and his friends had developed the "Young England" movement, and were trying to harmonize the interests of the landlords and the people by a system of joint co-operation for the relief of distress and the creation of friendly feeling and a new national sentiment, it cannot be said that the general state of the country was very greatly improved. On the 9th of February, 1842, therefore, Peel introduced his new sliding scale of corn duties to the House. Under this proposal, the duty upon imported wheat was to depend upon the home-selling price, and was considerably lowered from what it had been.

Lord John Russell at once moved a hostile amendment, which was afterwards negatived by a majority of 123. It devolved upon Mr. Gladstone to reply and defend the Government. He declared that the existing law was not chargeable with the present mass of distress, for which he blamed the successive bad harvests and their inevitable result in raising the price of food. He contended, therefore, that protection did not, in this case, increase the price of corn, and that the new sliding scale would practically involve no duties during times of high prices, and a moderate protection to the producer in periods of low prices. Mr. Villiers, a couple of weeks later, introduced his annual motion for the complete abolition of the Corn Laws, and it was lost by the tremendous majority of 393 to 90. Meantime great popular excitement prevailed, the Ministers were hooted when they appeared in public, and riots occurred in many of the large towns, while the Premier himself was burnt in effigy at Northampton.

The great undertaking of the session, however, and the evident beginning of the end, to those who are able to now look back upon the situation, was the revised tariff scheme presented in the Budget on March 11th. Though introduced and described by Sir Robert Peel, it was understood to be almost entirely the work of Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Morley, in his Life of Richard Cobden, refers to Peel's lieutenant, "who was then at the Board of Trade, and on whom much of the labour fell," and speaks of the work of preparation as having been enormous. Amongst 1,200 duty-paying articles—all of which had to be minutely examined and studied—750 were selected for treatment, and upon these the duties were either abolished entirely or else greatly reduced. In his speech, Sir Robert declared that it was the policy of the Government to relieve the manufacturing industry from its fiscal burdens, and, amid loud cheers from the free-traders, acknowledged that, as a general rule, it was wise to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. "But," he added, "if I proposed a greater change in the Corn Laws than that which I submit to the consideration of the House, I should only aggravate the distress of the country, and only increase the alarm which prevails amongst important interests."

In replying to pretended congratulations upon the Government's conversion to free trade, Mr. Gladstone took occasion to repudiate and deny any change in their principles. And, over and over again, he defended and dealt with the many-sided details of the great fiscal reforms which were being considered. It was his first important legislative scheme, and it is safe to say that no later measure of his long life has shown a more complete mastery of detail, power of practical work, and knowledge of commercial interests. Hansard records the fact that he spoke, or explained items in the measure, 129 times during this brief period. The proposed changes became law in due course, and, though not generally sufficient to satisfy the country, were quite enough to pave the way for the future fiscal revolution. They certainly raised Mr. Gladstone immensely in public and Parliamentary estimation, and made even the carping Greville write in his diary that "Gladstone has already displayed a capacity which makes his admission to the Cabinet indispensable."

During the next year the agitation in the country continued, and further changes were opposed in Parliament by both Peel and Gladstone. The majorities, however, were growing smaller in comparison, though still very large in fact. In the midst of these labours, Mr. Gladstone found time to deliver a most eloquent speech in Liverpool at the opening of the Collegiate Institute, and to make a strong appeal for the higher and better education of the middle classes. But his sympathies do not seem to have yet got down to the lower elements of society. Lord Shaftesbury, in his diary, writes, at this time, somewhat bitterly of "a grand oration by Gladstone at Liverpool." And then he adds: "The papers bepraise him, his eloquence, his principles, and his views.

Well, be it so; there is no lack of effort and declamation in behalf of fine edifices and the wealthier classes; but where is the zeal for ragged pin-makers, brats in calico works, and dirty colliers? Neither he nor Sandon ever made or kept a House for me, ever gave me a vote, or ever said a word in my support." As a matter of fact, Mr. Gladstone voted against more than one of Shaftesbury's philanthropic reforms, and does not seem to have ever given him much aid.

In June of this year, he succeeded the Earl of Ripon as President of the Board of Trade, and at the age of thirty-three became a member of the Cabinet. But although his position in politics now seemed assured, it was still affected in reality by his Church predilections; and the struggle between the two curious sides of his character—ecclesiastical theory and practical statecraft—was not yet over. An extraordinary letter, written to his friend Hope in August, 1844, brings into bold relief this silent opposition of a supersensitive conscience and modesty to the everyday work of politics. At a moment when the whole country had recognized his grasp of commercial questions, he urges the private belief that, "in matters connected with trade, I am certainly a cause of weakness to Sir Robert Peel." He then expresses his painful appreciation of the physical state of the peasantry, and his conviction, even while opposing the repeal of the Corn Laws, that one or two bad harvests would make that result inevitable. And he goes on to say that:

> "The purpose of Parliamentary life resolves itself with me simply and wholly into one question: Will it ever afford the means, under God, of rectifying the relations between the Church and the State, and give me the object of setting forward such a work? There must be either such a readjustment or a violent crisis. The present state of discipline cannot be borne for many years; and here lies the pinch . . . . As to the general objects of political life, they are not my objects. Upon the whole, I do not expect from the good sense of the English people, the force of the principle of property, and the conservative influence of the Church, less than the maintenance of our present monarchical and parliamentary constitution under all ordinary cirumstances."

A little later came a public evidence of this inward contest between two great tendencies. The Peel Government was pledged to the improvement of academical education in Ireland, and in the session of 1845 announced the intention of establishing non-sectarian colleges, and increasing the grant to Maynooth. This placed Mr. Gladstone in a position of great difficulty. In his published works he had protested against increasing the authority or subsidizing the strength of the Roman Catholic Church. Here, however, was a proposal to enhance the existing vote to a Roman Catholic College, with a view to the permanently increased influence and power of an institution, regarding which Canon Wordsworth had just declared that "the British nation pays for Maynooth, and the Pope governs it." Mr. Gladstone fully believed that the proposal was a fair one, and that no Church should be excluded from the benefits which the Government intended to bestow upon general higher education in Ireland.

But he feared that remaining in the Ministry would raise questions concerning his own integrity in making such a pronounced change of opinion, and although Archdeacon Manning and Mr. Hope both strongly urged him to do so, while retirement at this critical time threatened to mar his future prospects and career, he resigned his post. Before taking the step, however, he had completed a second "revised tariff," and carried into further effect the principles enunciated in 1842. A little later he published a pamphlet upon "Recent Commercial Legislation," which involved a study of the fiscal development of the period, and indicated a clear approximation towards free trade ideas. His quixotic retirement from the Ministry, and a place which was really the kernel of its most interesting operations, injured him for the moment, but not permanently. It made many regard him—to quote his own words in after years—as "fastidious and fanciful"—a student rather than a statesman.

But Peel knew better, and when the crisis came Gladstone was called to his side. The Irish famine struck the Government like a flash of lightning out of a clear sky. Its majority had never been greater or its position firmer than at the close of the session of 1845. But this threatened disaster made some immediate action necessary, and Peel was not the man to hesitate over a contingency which he had probably long anticipated in a sort of vague and general way. Amidst a mass of conflicting advice, the Cabinet was called together, and the Premier urged the immediate suspension of all restrictions upon the import of food. But only three members of the Government would support any measure stronger than the appointment of a relief commission. Lord John Russell, however, promptly and publicly announced his conversion to total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws, and the crisis was at once precipitated. Unable to carry his Ministry with him, Peel resigned, and Russell was called upon by the Queen. But the latter found himself unable to form a Government, and there was no alternative for Sir Robert but return to office, and the formation of a Ministry pledged to the repeal of the Corn Laws. Lord Stanley was one of those who declined to support such a policy, and Mr. Gladstone was at once offered his position of Secretary of State for the Colonies.

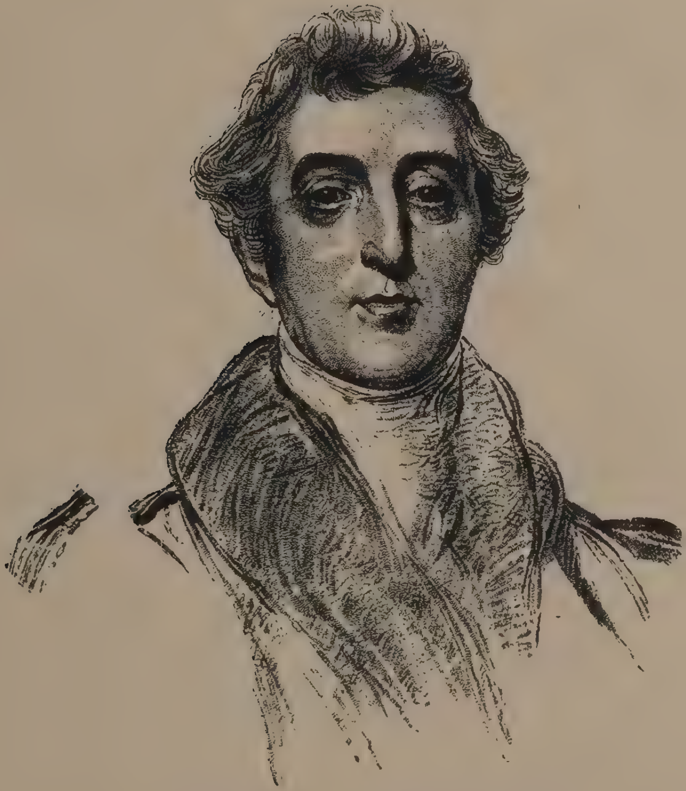
Amongst the many startling political transformations and events of the time, this adhesion of Mr. Gladstone to free trade lost him his seat at Newark. The Duke of Newcastle remained a protectionist, and naturally refused to allow the new Minister to sit any longer for his old constituency. With equal promptitude he turned his own son, Lord Lincoln, out of the representation of Nottinghamshire for having joined Peel's Government. Mr. Gladstone, therefore, did not present himself for re-election, and remained out of Parliament, though in office, during the stormy and memorable year which followed. But he was not idle, and throughout the ensuing session was largely responsible for the details of the famous Corn Law Abolition Bill of 1846. His combination of shrewdness and commercial knowledge did much to help in the settlement of the great change. And the inauguration of free trade in this year, as a distinct national policy, had many results.

It broke the Conservative party into two sections. There was the one which followed Peel in his retirement after the defeat of the Government in the House upon the very day that his Corn Law Bill had passed the Lords. And there was the other division which nailed protection to its masthead, and under the inspiring influence and bitter, brilliant invective of Disraeli had driven Peel from power, and indirectly established the Whigs once more in the government of the country, a position which they held during the next six years.

It resulted in the development of Gladstone as the leader of the Peelites or free-trade wing of the Tory party, and the establishment of Disraeli as the head of the protectionist wing of the same organization. It originated the rivalry which was destined to last for nearly forty years, and marked the first important step in the separation of Mr. Gladstone from his Tory principles and policy. It brought the latter into political connection with Oxford University, for which he had been chosen after a sharp contest in the general elections of 1847. Incidentally, it antagonized father and son for the first time, and made Sir John Gladstone pathetically exclaim that "William is trying to ruin the country."

During the next few years Mr. Gladstone was, of course, in Opposition. He had stood by Peel in his great policy; he was beside him in his memorable defeat; and he followed his principles for many years after his sudden death in 1850. But, during this period, another influence had come into play in his life. This was a marked antagonism between himself and Lord Palmerston. He could not apparently understand or appreciate the latter's love for a brilliant foreign policy, and, as had been indicated in the China war of 1840, and is proven in the correspondence of this period, the divergence of view soon became acute, and even personal, in its effects. Its importance is found in the fact that while the rise of Disraeli as a Conservative leader was helping to alienate Gladstone from the one party, the development of Palmerston as a Liberal leader was tending to keep him from the other.

Free trade, however, was now settled in principle, though not in detail; the prosperity of the country, as a result of many and varied extraneous causes, was, with some exceptions, assured for a prolonged period; the Irish people had been satisfied, for the moment, by the overwhelming kindness shown them during the famine; and Mr. Gladstone could therefore well afford to devote himself to a certain amount of rest, to voluminous correspondence upon Church topics, to the enjoyment of home life, and to the cultivation of that literary culture which has always seemed to possess so great a charm to his mind.



ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

Field-Marshal and Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1828-30.

HENRY, 1ST LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX,

Lord Chancellor of England, 1830-35.

CHAPTER VIII.

LIGHTS A LAMP OF LIBERTY IN ITALY.

NO country in the world has had more of mingled glory and degradation than Italy, and none have had such varied and exciting annals. Its national capital has been the seat of world-wide empire, the home of a great republic, the centre of the most compact and complex religious system in the world. It has been the mother of sciences, and the home of poetry and the arts. Venetian ships and commerce have swept the seas of the Old World, and the fame of Dante and of Florentine art will live as long as literature and the love of beauty hold a place in human interest.

But, on the other hand, that historic peninsula has been the constant arena of internecine conflict and ambitious struggle. Family feuds, and civic fights, and civil wars form a connecting link for its people between ancient and modern times. It has been one of the stamping grounds of despotism and oppression from the days of the Borgias or Machiavelli down to Francis the Second—and last—of Naples. It has, since the fifteenth century, acknowledged at intervals the predominance of Spain, has been the scene of conquest by France, and of subjugation by Austria.

During the winter of 1850-51, Mr. Gladstone spent three or four months in Naples. One of his children was ill, and a southern climate had been recommended. The beautiful city in which he decided to stay for a period was then under the rule of King Ferdinand II., a monarch with few redeeming features in his character, and fewer still in his national policy. Naples was, indeed, under a pure despotism, tempered by promises and occasional constitutional pretence. Italy, as a whole, was divided into various states; some, like Sardinia, struggling and hoping for freedom; others, such as Lombardy and Venice, seemingly in a condition of hopeless subjection to Austria. In Rome, the Pope, of course, held sway, and the doctrine of temporal sovereignty was a very real and living question. But the light was beginning to break, though at first very feebly and intermittently, through the surrounding gloom. Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia had, for some time, been preparing for a bold, ambitious, and patriotic policy; Cavour was in training for a career of signal statesmanship; Garibaldi was meditating those military measures which were to eventually make possible in Naples, and throughout Italy, the reforms about to be so ardently urged by Mr. Gladstone.

And the English statesman was not long in Naples before his sense of constitutional right was horrified and his spirit of intense humanity painfully shocked. He found, on all sides, the most abundant evidence that the system of Parliamentary government was a mere pretence, the constitution a farce, and the government an unmitigated despotism. But more than this became apparent. Half the members of the Chamber of Deputies were in prison for daring to form an opposition party, while twenty thousand of the people were confined in various prisons and jails on the charge of political disaffection, and many of them were understood to have been treated with the grossest cruelty and violence.

Once his enthusiastic hatred of oppression had been aroused by the sights and sounds of the life around him, it is not difficult to imagine the burning desire which Mr. Gladstone soon showed to aid in remedying the evils everywhere visible. Publicity seemed the only possible way of giving help. Armed rebellion was essentially distasteful to him, and his regard for the constitution of any country, Italian or English, was at this time as strong against the people who might illegally infringe it as against the King who had, in this case, broken it. But to arouse the public opinion of Europe on behalf of the oppressed, and against the oppressor; to stir up the inborn sentiment of English love of liberty on behalf of those suffering from a Neapolitan despot's misgovernment; to direct this feeling in Europe and England so as to bring about a peaceful intervention and orderly change—this it was which appeared to him a practicable and desirable policy.

The idea reflected honour upon both his head and his heart, and the execution of it was alike brilliant and memorable. But it must be admitted that the whole policy was Palmerstonian in design and performance. It was a somewhat extraordinary action to be taken by a politician who had, a few months before, denounced Lord Palmerston with all his skill and eloquence for intervention in the affairs of Greece, and remonstrated with passionate earnestness against "the vain conception that we, forsooth, have a mission to be the censors of vice and folly, of abuse and imperfection, among the other countries of the world." The whole matter, however, illustrated the resistless power of his conscience—a force which, when influenced by sympathy and love of liberty, swept away, like cobwebs, all the opposing circumstances of political expediency, and, in more than one remarkable case, of even political consistency.

Instead, therefore, of giving up his time to the study of that Italian literature which he so warmly admired; of sharing in the amusements with which the lovely city of Naples so greatly abounded; or of indulging in the delightful archæological explorations and Vesuvian visits which the opportunity afforded, Mr. Gladstone devoted himself to ascertaining the truth of the sorrowful rumours and veiled statements which he heard upon every side. For this purpose he visited prisons and dungeons, sometimes secretly, sometimes openly; examined a great number of cases in which cruelty and injustice had been perpetrated; and made himself thoroughly familiar with the condition of affairs amongst the people. The Court he neither visited nor desired to visit. Invitations were declined, and even the Royal wishes were evaded by one who had no desire to mingle with the men responsible for so much oppression and misgovernment.

The result of these investigations Mr. Gladstone decided to put in the form of a letter to his old friend and colleague in Sir Robert Peel's administration—the Earl of Aberdeen. It was at once published, and was followed by another, in which he recapitulated his statements and strengthened his position. The sensation they created was very great, and the influence wielded was more far-reaching and effective than at first appeared. His charges against the Neapolitan Government were systematic, sustained, and severe. The position of affairs was reviewed with a powerful pen, and one which did not hesitate to apply the most unmistakable language to the incessant, deliberate, and criminal violation of all law and justice by the King of Naples and his satellites. It was, as he said, "the negation of God erected into a system of government."

After making a brief reference to the illegal government of the Two Sicilies, Mr. Gladstone proceeded to point out the accuracy of what had hitherto been to outside countries, only suppositious and incredible rumours—the imprisonment or exile of half the Chamber of Deputies, the immense number of political prisoners, and the complete abrogation of personal liberty and the laws of the State. The Government, he declared, at its pleasure, and in defiance of law, ordered domiciliary visits; examined houses, even to the extent of tearing up floors and breaking down walls; seized papers and personal property; imprisoned men by the thousands without warrant, or even written authority, or statement of the cause of arrest. Charges were invented, perjury was freely resorted to, and forgery frequently used, in order to aid in disposing of inconvenient persons who might possess patriotic prejudices, or be guilty of an unnecessary fondness for individual freedom and constitutional government.

The prisons he described as in a filthy and unendurable condition. Referring to these frightful dungeons, Mr. Gladstone declared them to be "the extreme of filth and horror." He had seen something of them, but not the worst. "This I have seen, my Lord: the official doctors not going to the sick prisoners, but the sick prisoners, men almost with death on their faces, toiling upstairs to them at that charnel-house of the Vicaria, because the lower regions of such a palace of darkness are too foul and loathsome to allow it to be expected that professional men should consent to earn bread by entering them." He deals with the sufferings of Pironte, formerly a judge; of the Baron Porcari; and of the well-known patriot and politician, Carlo Poerio.

These men, and others, who had been treated with similar tyranny and cruelty were the leaders of the people, and, as he pointed out to Lord Aberdeen, their condemnation for treason was as gross a violation of the laws of truth, justice, and decency, as would have been a like treatment accorded in England to leading Liberals, such as Lord John Russell, Lord Lansdowne, or the Earl of Aberdeen himself. Settembrini was one of the victims singled out for an historic reference. The capital sentence passed upon him had not been carried out, but he had been reserved for a much more dreadful fate. He was condemned to double irons for life on a remote and water-bound rock, where it was understood he would also be subjected to torture—one of the methods specified being the thrusting of sharp instruments under his finger-nails.

The case of Poerio was equally painful, and concerned an ex-Prime Minister of the country, a man of pronounced ability, and one who possessed a character which has become famed for its refinement and beauty. Mr. Gladstone spoke of him as "a cultivated and accomplished gentleman, of whose innocence, obedience to law, and love of his country, I was as firmly and as rationally assured as of your lordship's, or that of any other man of the very highest character." Yet this party leader had been arrested and tried in the most illegal manner, convicted of treason by the distinct use of intimidation upon the judges, and imprisoned with sixteen others in a small room which is described as the closest of dungeons. Each prisoner bore a weight of chain amounting to thirty-two pounds, which was not to be unfastened for any purpose whatever. And Mr. Gladstone adds that, after talking long with Poerio during his trial and with the many others who were interviewed for a purpose, he could not suppress the conviction that the object of the Government in this particular case was "to obtain the scaffold's aim by means more cruel than the scaffold," and thus get rid of a man whose mental power they feared, without arousing the excitement which might follow a public execution. He concluded this letter, which had gone into ample detail concerning all the charges advanced, by declaring that it was time the veil should be lifted upon scenes fitter for hell than for earth.

In his second contribution to the subject, Mr. Gladstone told Lord Aberdeen that he stood by all his vital statements, had nothing to retract, and thought that his representations were not at all too highly charged. He admitted that it was hard to believe that such things could happen in a Christian country, but, unfortunately, the facts were too strong to leave room for even reasonable doubt. He then went on to deal with the political situation in Naples and its tributary territory, and examined with some minuteness the articles of the Neapolitan Constitution, the contrast which they bore to the actual government of the country, and the absolute antagonism of the administration to all law and order. He also traced the debased ideas concerning moral, political, and religious questions which were taught the youths of Naples in a current school catechism, but, at the same time, he exempted the Roman Catholic clergy, as a body, from implication in the actions and policy of the Government.

The educational work referred to seems to have been a very singular production. It was in the form of questions and answers, and really constituted a strong manual of despotism. In one place it is declared "that the people cannot establish a constitution or fundamental laws, because such laws are of necessity a limitation of sovereignty," which latter constitutes "that highest and paramount power ordained of God for the well-being of society." The right of the sovereign to disregard his oath is plainly taught, and his position is practically defined as one above all human laws and ordinary obligations. Mr. Gladstone declined to go further into detail concerning "the false, base, and demoralizing doctrines, sometimes ludicrous, but oftener horrible," which he found veiled under the phrases of religion in "this abominable book." But he took this opportunity to denounce it publicly as "a complete systematized philosophy of perjury," adapted to the facts of Neapolitan history, and, under this and a religious guise, taught in the schools by the sanction and authority of the Government.

Incidentally, Mr. Gladstone held up to King Ferdinand II. the warning example of the fate which had befallen Charles I. of England. But in doing so he pointed to the vast difference which existed between the conduct and character of the two monarchs, and offered a rare tribute to the latter's personal qualities. "He was," declared the future Liberal leader, "devout, chaste, affectionate, humane, generous, refined, a patron of letters and of art; without the slightest tinge of cruelty; frank and sincere, too, in his personal character; but, unhappily, believing that under the pressure of State necessity, such as he might judge it, his pledges to his people need not be kept." Yet, as Mr. Gladstone observed, to this other monarch, who possessed few, indeed, of the benevolent and honourable features which characterized the English sovereign; Charles I. "saw his cause ruined, in despite of a loyalty and enthusiasm sustaining him such as is now a pure vision of the past. It was not ruined by the strength of the anti-monarchical or puritanical factions, nor even by his predilections for absolutism; but by that one sad and miserable feature of insincerity which prevented the general rally of his well-disposed and sober-minded subjects round him till the time had passed, the Commonwealth had been launched down the slide of revolution, and those violent and reckless fanatics had gained the upper hand who left the foul stain of his blood on the good name of England."

It must be admitted, from even the hastiest perusal of these elaborate letters, that Mr. Gladstone was not afraid to state his views in clear and distinct English. And his blows upon the shield of Ferdinand's miserable despotism were pointed all the more keenly by his Conservative estimate of Cromwell's revolutionary fanaticism. He concluded by a renewed and vigorous appeal to all civilized public opinion, and by asking if it was just or wise to give countenance and warrant to the doctrine of those who taught that kings and their governments were the natural enemies of man, the tyrants over his body, and the contaminators of his soul? And if we thought not, then every State in Europe, every public man, no matter what his party or his colour, every member of the great family of Christendom whose heart beat for its welfare, should, by declaring his sentiments on every fitting occasion, separate himself from such a government, and decline to recognize the smallest moral partnership or kin with it, until the huge mountain of crime which it had reared should have been levelled with the dust.

It was natural that such letters as these should create somewhat of a sensation. Sir George Cornewall Lewis, always an acute observer, wrote in the September following their publication to Sir Edmund Head, Governor-General of Canada, that "Gladstone's pamphlet about Naples has had a prodigious run; it has been universally read; and has made a most powerful impression. For the future it will do good." There was every reason for this. The writer was a responsible statesman who had held high office in England, and was likely to do so again. His reputation for honour and political integrity was very great, and he was Conservative in principle and practice. Hence there could be no Radical or Republican prejudice at the back of his denunciations. And while the charges were not of a character to require—though they might urge—immediate intervention by other Powers, they were yet sufficiently pronounced and proven to let in the broad light of day upon Neapolitan conditions and government, and make it impossible for other rulers with arbitrary inclinations to lend sympathy or aid to Ferdinand when his time of trouble came. They also focussed the sentiment of all free communities upon the right side in the Italian struggle for liberty, and in this way gave substantial strength to those who so greatly required international sympathy and support.

Lord Palmerston, who was Foreign Minister at this time, was pleased with the letters and their reception, but could not, of course, undertake any active intervention. What was possible he did. In reply to a question in the House on July 17th, 1851, he stated that the Government had received confirmation of the popular impression concerning the calamitous condition of things in Naples, but did not deem it right to intervene in the internal affairs of that State. "At the same time," continued the speaker, "Mr. Gladstone, whom I may freely name, though not in his capacity as a member of Parliament, has done himself, I think, very great honour by the course he pursued at Naples, and by the course he has followed since." Concurring also in the feeling that the influence of public opinion in Europe might have some useful effect in setting such matters right, Lord Palmerston announced that he had sent copies of the pamphlet containing these letters to the British Ministers at the various Continental courts, and had directed them to draw the attention of the different Governments to the nature and extent of the charges made.

A number of replies to Mr. Gladstone were immediately written, but the pamphleteers were so evidently men of straw, the intention of bolstering up Ferdinand and his Government appeared so clearly, and the refutations attempted were so inherently weak, that they attracted little attention in England. One pamphlet, however, written under the auspices of the King, by a Mr. Charles Macfarlane, was made important through its adoption as a sort of official reply, and by a request from the Neapolitan envoy in London to Lord Palmerston that the latter should forward "the reply" to the courts of Europe as he had done the original charges. This gave Palmerston his opportunity, and he at once declined to assist in the circulation of a document which he described as "only a tissue of bare assertions and reckless denials, mixed up with coarse ribaldry and commonplace abuse of public men and political parties."

He then proceeded to administer castigation and offer advice on his own account. He stated that Mr. Gladstone's letters to Lord Aberdeen exhibited a picture of illegality, injustice, and cruelty, such as might have been deemed impossible of existence in a European country at the present day. Unfortunately, collateral evidence and information proved that the evils described were by no means overstated. The spirit of those letters seemed to him one of friendship rather than hostility to the Crown of Naples as such, and the purpose one of remedying abuses through the influence of European public opinion, and thus saving the Neapolitan monarchy from otherwise inevitable convulsions. It might have been hoped, therefore, in its own interest, that the Government of Naples would have received the letters in the spirit in which they were written, and have endeavoured to correct in some way the manifest and grave evils of the situation.

But King Ferdinand accepted the rebuke and the advice in silence. He had practically no defence, except that obtained through the aid of subsidized writers, or the medium of some distorted dislike of England and English institutions. In a letter to his brother, about this time, Lord Palmerston observed that the Neapolitan Government was not likely to appreciate his reply to the request of its envoy, and added that he would like the King of Naples to have received a collection of the articles upon this subject which had appeared in the various newspapers of England and Germany. Meantime, Mr. Gladstone prepared and published a very complete and crushing reply to the criticism which had been accepted as a defence by the parties concerned. But it was not needed. His first letters had been accepted as, in the main, accurate, and they had really done the work.

Writing to Lord Shaftesbury, on June 4th, Sir Anthony Panizzi, an Italian by birth, but an Englishman by adoption, referred with enthusiasm to the work thus done by Mr. Gladstone, and declared that a statement by him, even unsupported, would outweigh, in the opinion of Europe, the statement of all the judges and other officials of the Neapolitan court. "My blood boils," he added, "to have to call such people judges, and such a den a court." He went on to express his belief that the writer of the letters to Lord Aberdeen was not only a scrupulously honourable man, but one of the most acute living statesmen, and concluded by stating "that Mr. Gladstone is a thorough Italian scholar, and reads as well and speaks the language as fluently and correctly as a well-educated Italian."

During this period and for many years afterwards Panizzi used to correspond with Mr. Gladstone, and the following extract from one of the latter's epistles, written a few weeks after the above letter, is decidedly interesting: "I am certain," observed Mr. Gladstone, "as a matter of fact, that the Italian habit of preaching unity and nationality, in preference to showing grievances, produces a revulsion here; for if there are two things on earth that John Bull hates they are an abstract proposition or idea, and the Pope." But events moved quickly during the ensuing decade. Whether the genuine and bitter grievances to which the Italian people were subjected, or the abstract idea of nationality, had the greatest influence in the result need not be considered here. It is sufficient to note that in 1856, after vigorous remonstrances from England and France against the continued misgovernment of King Ferdinand, the ambassadors of those powers were withdrawn from Naples; that in 1859 Poerio and a number of companions were banished to America, but while on the way there seized the vessel and came to England, where they were received with great enthusiasm; that a little later Ferdinand died after dreadful physical sufferings, and was succeeded by Francis II.; that in 1860 Garibaldi invaded Naples, carried everything before him, became Dictator, established a free government, and released the political prisoners.

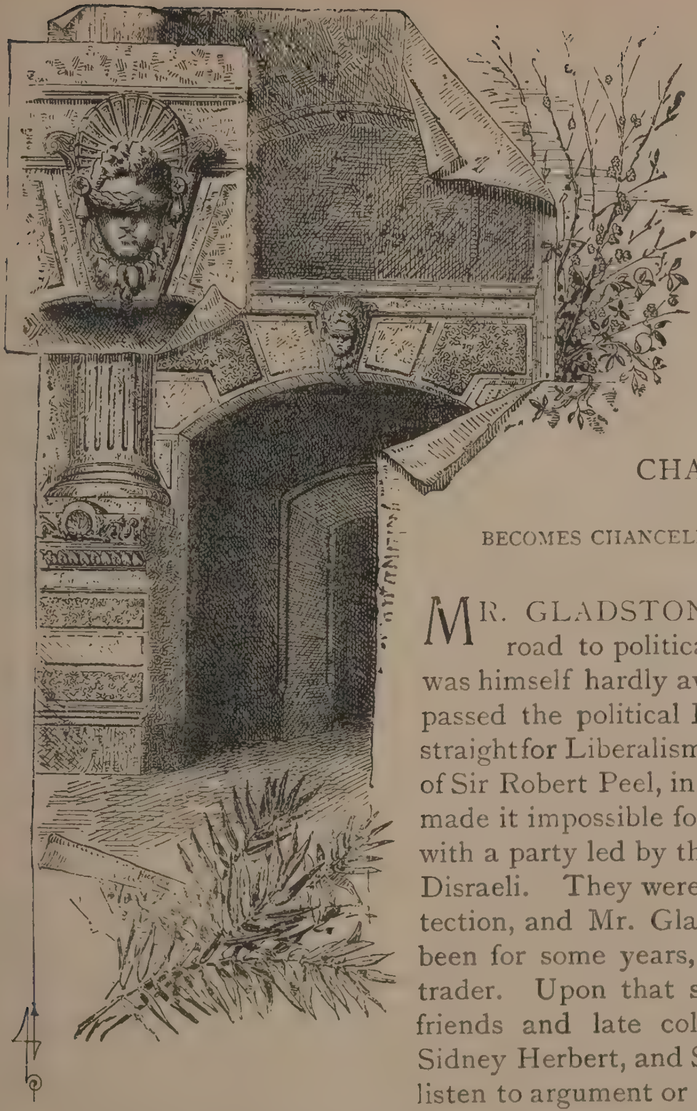
Then followed the final act in a stirring drama which had included many States other than Naples, and had witnessed the intervention of France, the defeat of Austria at Magenta and Solferino, the insurrection in the Papal territories, the foundation of a new kingdom, the freedom of a united people. With the union of Naples and Sardinia, in 1860, by a vote of the whole people, and the crowning of Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia as King of Italy in March, 1861, came the settlement of the Neapolitan question, and the establishment of that liberty and constitutional government which Mr. Gladstone had so earnestly urged in 1850 and in subsequent years. Of this Italian movement for liberty and nationality, which was so brilliantly guided by Cavour, helped by his sovereign, the King of Sardinia, and fought for by that sturdy republican, Garibaldi, the English statesman may be well considered one of the makers and moulders. Writing, many years afterwards—24th January, 1881—Sir George F. Bowen, a distinguished Colonial administrator, observed in a personal letter to an English statesman, that he had found Mr. Gladstone to be "regarded by the overwhelming majority of Italians as the chief foreign founder of Italian nationality, and with almost the same sort of affectionate veneration with which the Americans regarded Lafayette." The inquiries, the correct information, the indignation which followed upon his famous letters to Lord Aberdeen, had been unquestionably prominent influences in the general result, and they have certainly made his name a most admired and respected word in the history of modern Italy and the hearts of patriotic Italians.

This incident in Mr. Gladstone's career was, however, important aside from its effect upon affairs in Italy. It marked a temporary approach to friendship between himself and Lord Palmerston, which was not destined to last very long. A brief reference has been made to Mr. Gladstone's speech, in 1850, upon the Don Pacifico question, and the advisability of English interference in Greece. The history of that famous affair, taken in conjunction with the Neapolitan matter, shows the curious complexity of his character. Don Pacifico was a Jew, resident in Athens, but a British subject. His house had been sacked by a Grecian mob in 1847, and he had immediately demanded compensation from the Greek Government, which was characteristically slow in coming to the point. Eventually, Lord Palmerston and the British Government took up his cause, made the private claims into a national demand, insisted upon the immediate payment of an indemnity, ordered the British fleet to the Piræus, and eventually seized all the Greek vessels in those waters as a punishment for non-payment.

Russia and France took offence at these proceedings, and were told it was none of their business. The French ambassador was promptly withdrawn from London, and for a while war seemed possible. Of course, there had been other complications in connection with Greece, but the Don Pacifico question was made the central episode of the dispute. The Tories promptly carried a vote of censure in the Lords. Mr. Roebuck, on behalf of the Radicals and Whigs, immediately proposed a vote of confidence in the Commons, and the debate commenced on June 24th, 1850. Lord Palmerston, who could not usually be styled an orator, made a great speech—one of the most powerful ever heard in the House. He defended his policy up to the hilt, and declared that, in every step taken, in every line written or spoken upon this subject, he had been influenced solely by a desire to protect Don Pacifico as a British subject, and to show that the meanest, the poorest, and even the most disreputable subject of the Crown was entitled to defence against foreign oppression by the whole might of England. His great aim was to ensure that "as the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say *Civis Romanus Sum*, so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, should feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England would protect him against injustice and wrong."

The fate of the Government depended upon the ensuing vote, but this speech saved it. "I am a Roman citizen," and all that Palmerston's application of the phrase involved, caught the ear of the House, and charmed the patriotism of the country. Graham and Herbert, Molesworth and Peel, Disraeli and Gladstone, all opposed him, but their eloquence was wasted so far as the decision was concerned. None the less, Mr. Gladstone's speech had been both important and significant. It was one of the finest exhibitions of eloquence he had yet given the Commons, and served to greatly enhance his growing reputation. He declared that he favoured non-intervention as a principle in foreign policy, and not active interference; he analyzed somewhat uselessly, but with skill and ability, Lord Palmerston's captivating phrase; he thought it the duty of a Foreign Secretary to "conciliate peace with dignity"; he denounced the bumptious self-esteem of the average English traveller abroad; he urged "the sacred independence" of other nations; and protested in words already quoted against arbitrary meddling with the internal affairs of other States.

Altogether, it was an angry, a clever, and a brilliant speech, and one which probably represented the settled principle and policy of the speaker. It illustrated one side of his complex character—love of peace and opposition to foreign entanglements—just as his enthusiasm for the unfortunate people of Naples a few months afterwards illustrated the power of a sympathetic conscience and an emotional nature. In the one case he denounced English intervention on behalf of an ill-used British subject; on the other, he urged European intervention in support of the oppressed Neapolitans. The actions were contradictory, but may be reconciled by the simple fact that in the first place the oppression did not come home to his sympathies, and was, perhaps, not very clearly proven, while in the latter case, and through practical experience, it stirred every fibre of his nature. The two incidents indicate also the cosmopolitan character and tendency of his ideas at this time. With Lord Palmerston the main question always was whether any British interest or individual was affected; with Mr. Gladstone it did not matter what the nationality, so long as the wrong was admitted and the right action indicated to his own sensitive conscience.



CHAPTER IX.

BECOMES CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

MR. GLADSTONE was now on the high road to political power, and, although he was himself hardly aware of it at the time, had passed the political Rubicon, and was heading straight for Liberalism and leadership. The death of Sir Robert Peel, in July, 1850, had apparently made it impossible for him to work in harmony with a party led by the Earl of Derby and Mr. Disraeli. They were still inclined towards protection, and Mr. Gladstone was now, and had been for some years, a vigorous and firm free-trader. Upon that subject neither he nor his friends and late colleagues—Lord Aberdeen, Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham—would listen to argument or political considerations.

In 1851, Lord Derby, who was during his career on terms of intimate friendship with Mr. Gladstone, endeavoured to obtain his adhesion to the Conservative party. On being asked by the Queen to form a Government, in succession to that of Lord John Russell, he offered him, it is said, the Secretaryship of State for Foreign Affairs. Presumably, Mr. Disraeli was to have been Chancellor of the Exchequer. What extraordinary results might have come from such a combination can now only be guessed at, but the divergence of view and character was already too great to possibly allow of the leaders concerned working in harness together. Speaking in the House of Commons on March 15th, 1852, Mr. Gladstone declared that, at the time he was approached by Lord Derby, "communications terminated on his informing me that he was desirous of imposing a moderate fixed duty on corn. The noble lord said it was not his intention to reverse the policy of free trade, but to modify it. I was opposed alike to a reversal or modification of that policy." But if he was determined not to withdraw an inch from his free-trade position, he was as yet equally determined not to merge the political identity of himself and the other Peelites in the Liberal ranks. He would not join the administration of Lord John Russell, but preferred to fight an altogether independent battle for the Church and the new commercial system. Still, the end was becoming inevitable, although it might take another decade to make the Liberal influence absolutely predominant in his career. Perhaps it never was to be wholly so in his political character.

A curious incident of this time, and one which preceded the formation of the Coalition Ministry in 1852, was the celebrated agitation against Papal aggression. It had, for some years, been the announced policy of the Pope and the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church to introduce and establish in England a complete hierarchical system. Events had for a time, however, delayed the consummation of the plan, and when, in 1850, its completion was made public with dramatic suddenness and much pretension, a storm of Protestant indignation was aroused, and Lord John Russell, with characteristic impetuosity, had rushed into the fray. There was a great deal of injudicious conduct on both sides, and, as usual in cases of religious strife or ebullitions of popular bigotry, many things occurred which have since been regretted.

Dr. Wiseman, the most prominent Roman Catholic ecclesiastic in the country, was made a Cardinal, and proclaimed Archbishop of Westminster, and Primate. New sees were created, and their boundaries defined in a document which, in style, was worthy of the Middle Ages and the loftiest days of Papal supremacy. The Cardinal followed this manifesto up with a pastoral, intended, like the other, for English Catholics, but couched in similarly unwise and dangerous language. Coming at a time when so many Anglicans had just joined the Church of Rome, and when the Tractarians, or extreme High Church party, were in a position of considerable influence—one which they used to voice their antagonism to the Whigs generally, and to Lord J. Russell's ecclesiastical appointments particularly—this action and policy was eminently calculated to stir up and enrage the fiery little Premier. The immediate result was the famous Durham Letter.

It was a strongly-worded document. Lord John told the Bishop of Durham that this aggression was both "insolent and insidious," and that it was an attempt to "impose a foreign yoke on our minds and consciences." He declared that there was an assumption of power in all the documents which had come from Rome, and a pretension to supremacy over the realm of England, which were inconsistent with the Queen's supremacy, with the rights of the Bishops and clergy, or with the spiritual independence of the nation, even as asserted in Roman Catholic times. A violent agitation ensued. Anglicans looked upon the Papal proposals as a denial of the jurisdiction of the Church of England; strong supporters of the Constitution regarded it as an attack upon the Royal prerogative; and many patriotic and well-meaning people considered the whole matter as an improper foreign interference in British internal affairs.

All kinds of public meetings, public remonstrances and resolutions, addresses to the Queen, and clerical speeches of more or less violence, followed. Parliament met on the 4th of February, 1851, and received the announcement that a measure would be presented for the maintenance of the "rights of the Crown and the independence of the nation." Three days later Lord J. Russell brought in his Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. It prohibited the assumption of all territorial titles by Roman Catholic Bishops, and reasserted, in a somewhat offensive way, certain principles of Protestant ascendency. Lengthy discussions and a protracted delay ensued, during which occurred the resignation of the Premier, the vain attempts of Lord Derby and the Earl of Aberdeen to form administrations, and the return to office of Lord John Russell.

The debate on the second reading was memorable for a powerful oration from Mr. Gladstone. He defended the Roman Catholic minority in England, whom he declared to be not responsible for the language used in the Papal rescripts. He thought the documents in question dealt with the spiritual interests of a portion of the people, and not with their temporal concerns. It was, therefore, clear to him that Parliament had no right to interfere in the matter. The speech concluded with a protest in the name of justice against legislation which no generous people would or could support when the passions of the moment had subsided. Though the measure passed by a very large majority, it was opposed by many of the ablest men in the House. Beside Mr. Gladstone stood such leaders as Graham, Roundell Palmer—afterwards Lord Selborne—Cobden, Bright, Roebuck, and Milner Gibson. And the names mentioned indicate another step on the road to Liberalism, even though he and his supporters were opposing a Whig Premier and a great reforming leader. But while this alliance threw him temporarily into the arms of the Radicals, it at the same time showed the ecclesiastical bias of his mind, which was then and has since consistently remained favourable to harmonious action in many directions between the Church of England and the Church of Rome.

In dealing with this particular question, Mr. Gladstone and his small minority in the House proved themselves to be entirely in the right, and the vast majority very greatly in the wrong. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill was never anything else than a dead letter. Its only result was to irritate the Roman Catholics, and in 1871 it was repealed by Mr. Gladstone's Government, amid unanimous consent and many expressions of regret that it had ever appeared upon the statute book. Following the passage of this measure came the dismissal of Lord Palmerston by the Queen, nominally through her Prime Minister. In spite of several warnings from Her Majesty, he had, in a rash recognition of the French Government of Louis Napoleon, once more exceeded his powers as Foreign Secretary, and upon this occasion had placed the Ministry in a very awkward position. But in February, 1852, he enjoyed, to use his own cheerful words, a "tit-for-tat with Johnny Russell." A Militia Bill had been proposed which embodied the popular alarm at the rise of Napoleon III., and the mystery which as yet surrounded his actions and projects. His growing power might mean a war of revenge upon England. But, as events turned out, it meant alliance with England, and war upon Russia.

It was, however, Lord Palmerston's opportunity, and, in an amendment to the measure, he defeated the now somewhat discredited administration. Although his action put the Tories into office, he did not seem to care very much, and, as it happened, their tenure of power was to be very brief. Lord Derby, upon this occasion, succeeded in forming his Government, which included Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Marquess of Salisbury—father of the future Premier—and Lord Malmesbury, amongst its chief members. He once more made overtures to Mr. Gladstone, but without success. A new Militia Bill was prepared and carried through the House, receiving in the Lords the warm support of the Duke of Wellington, who shortly afterwards passed away, amid the respect of the world and the admiring regard of his countrymen. Political opponents had long forgotten the struggles of the past, and all sections joined in eulogy of the great commander and leader. Mr. Gladstone's remarks were especially valuable, and deduced lessons from the noble career just closed which were then and are still worthy of the most careful consideration.

Many of the Duke of Wellington's great qualities he declared to merit humble and universal imitation as well as admiration. His "sincere and unceasing devotion to our country; that honest and upright determination to act for the benefit of the country on every occasion; that devoted loyalty which, while it made him ever anxious to serve the Crown, never induced him to conceal from the Sovereign that which he believed to be the truth; that devotedness in the constant performance of duty; that temperance of his life which enabled him at all times to give his mind and his faculties to the services which he was called upon to perform; that regular, consistent, and unceasing piety by which he was distinguished at all times of his life; these are qualities that are attainable by others, and which should not be lost as an example."

Events now moved rapidly. With the passing of the Great Duke seemed to go the olden Toryism, as well as the ascendency of the Whigs. Mr. Disraeli was busy educating his party, while Mr. Gladstone was going through the mental and political evolution which was to make him the financial mentor and moulder of the opposite party. Tories were ere long to be replaced in political nomenclature by Conservatives and the Whigs by Liberals. The Peelites were to be eventually absorbed into the latter ranks. But before this general result occurred there was to be a period of financial rivalry between Gladstone and Disraeli, and the interregnum of the Crimean war. Following the formation of the Derby-Disraeli Government, there had been a makeshift Budget from the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, which, in spite of haste, showed much ability. Then came the dissolution of the House. The elections resulted in the return of about 300 Conservatives, 315 Liberals, and 40 Peelites, and practically left the balance of power in the hands of Mr. Gladstone and his friends.

His position appears for a time to have been doubtful. There was much talk of his joining the Tory Ministry, and, on November 28th, Lord Malmesbury—Foreign Secretary—remarks in his diary: "I cannot make out Gladstone, who seems to me a dark horse." It was, in fact, the critical moment of his political career, and his decision not to join hands with Disraeli on this occasion, while it involved no immediate personal declaration, really decided the tendency of his future development and opened the way for the gradual drift of the Peelites, first through coalition, and then, by similarity of policy, into the ranks of Liberalism. There were two leading causes for this line of action. The first was the free-trade question, which still remained an issue in politics, and the second was the natural estrangement between Disraeli and Gladstone. So far, this mutual feeling was not personal, but was largely based upon the former's memorable assaults upon Sir Robert Peel. To Mr. Gladstone, that statesman had now become an object of hero-worship as great as the regard he had once lavished upon the personality and memory of Canning. To the heartfelt sympathy which Canning had evoked by his generous foreign policy from an enthusiastic young man had succeeded an equally fervent admiration for Peel's character, commercial policy, and political achievements.

In his eloquent speech to the House upon the occasion of Peel's death, Mr. Gladstone had shown unusual feeling, and had mourned his great leader most sincerely. As he then said, so he continued to feel: "We had fondly hoped that in whatever position he was placed, by the weight of his character, by the splendour of his talents, by the purity of his virtues, he would still have been spared to render his country the most essential services." To Mr. Gladstone it had, indeed, been a moment when he could appropriately use those beautiful lines by Scott:

"Now is the stately column broke;
The beacon light is quenched in smoke;
The trumpet's silver voice is still;
The warder silent on the hill."

And the party of brilliant men who, with him, had stood by Sir Robert in the great Corn Law struggle; had fought with him in the four years which intervened between that time and his death; and had now come back to Parliament nominally as free-trade Conservatives—counting forty votes in a division—were not likely to willingly enter a Government which included their most bitter critic as Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House. Lord Derby's sincere desire to ultimately re-unite the two wings of the party was therefore doomed to disappointment, though it was to be a good many years yet before he gave up all hope, and though Disraeli, upon more than one occasion, offered to give up his position to Gladstone.

But though these influences can be traced now, and their general effect analyzed with reasonable clearness, all was confusion in those days, and no one knew just exactly what Mr. Gladstone and the Peelites were likely to do upon any given occasion. So prominent a Liberal as Sir George Cornewall Lewis had written to a friend in July, 1850, and shortly after Peel's death, that "the general opinion is that Gladstone will renounce his free-trade opinions and become leader of the protectionists." He, however, did not personally think anything of the sort, but believed that the event would have "the effect of removing a weight from a spring, he will come forward more, and take more part in discussions." And not long before Bishop Philpotts of Exeter, a Church Tory of the strongest type, had named Gladstone as the statesman to whom the country must mainly look.

Early in December, 1852, Mr. Disraeli brought down the Budget, which was to win the day or wreck his Government. It was an ambitious, a clever, and a skilful attempt to reconcile opposing interests; to redeem pledges made to agriculturists, and avoid offence to the free-trade and other interests. It proposed to reduce the duty on malt, tea, and sugar, and to increase the duty on inhabited houses, and extend the income tax to Ireland. His speech was brilliant, but not as conciliatory as was desirable under the circumstances. It really pelted opponents with epigrams, taunts, and sarcasm. As if he knew what was coming, and could almost have anticipated the combination against himself, and the kind of Government which was to succeed that of Lord Derby, he concluded his speech with some memorable and oft-quoted words:

> "I know what I have to face. I have to face a coalition. The combination may be successful. But coalitions, although successful, have always found this, that their triumph has been brief. This, too, I know, that England does not love coalitions. I appeal from the coalition to that public opinion which governs this country—to that public opinion whose mild and irresistible influence can control even the decrees of Parliament, and without whose support the most august and ancient institutions are but 'the baseless fabric of a vision.'"

No sooner had Mr. Disraeli taken his seat than Mr. Gladstone commenced to speak in a manner most unusual, and with a degree of bitterness and a struggle at self-suppression which indicated how exceedingly angry he really felt. He sprang at his opponent with a sort of fierce delight, and tore his financial proposals into ribbons with a skill which won admiration on all sides. It was the beginning of a long rivalry, and marked the change from an antagonism originally based, in Mr. Gladstone's case, upon the treatment accorded Peel to a sentiment of somewhat acrid and personal animosity. The speaker commenced by severely condemning the personal references which had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, amid loud cheers from the Opposition, said:

> "I must tell the right honourable gentleman that whatever he has learnt—and he has learnt much—he has not learnt the limits of discretion, of moderation and forbearance, that ought to restrain the conduct and language of every member of this House, the disregard of which would be an offence in the meanest amongst us, but which is an offence of tenfold weight when committed by the leader of the House of Commons."

After this he proceeded to criticize the Budget in detail, as well as upon general principles; denouncing it as embodying "a delusive scheme," and as being "the most perverted budget, in its tendency and ultimate effects," that he had ever seen. When the House divided at the conclusion of his speech, the vote stood 286 for the Government, and 305 against. The Ministry was therefore defeated by a majority of nineteen, and Lord Derby at once wrote to the Queen announcing the result and tendering his resignation. It was a moment of great excitement, and the Conservative feeling against Mr. Gladstone ran high. A couple of days after these events, and while Lord Aberdeen was forming his Administration, Mr. Greville tells us that the main cause of all the turmoil was in an upper room of the Carlton Club, while a number of the members were having a dinner downstairs "After dinner," says Greville, "when they got drunk, they went upstairs, and finding Gladstone alone in the drawing-room some of them proposed to throw him out of the window. This they did not quite dare to do, but contented themselves with giving some insulting message to the waiter, and then went away." Although Mr. Gladstone remained a member of this ultra-Conservative club until he joined the Whig Administration in 1859, this shows how painful his general position must have been at times, and how difficult it is to be really independent in politics.

The new Coalition Government of Whigs and Peelites was an exceedingly strong one in point of ability. The Premier, Lord Aberdeen, was an amiable, accomplished, and really able man. He had seen much public service, had been twice Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had won the admiration of Sir Robert Peel, whom he so devotedly followed, and filled a very high place in the estimation of Mr. Gladstone himself, both then and afterwards. But he lacked some quality requisite to the holding together, in united action, of a band of brilliant men during a critical period such as was now coming. Mr. Gladstone naturally became Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord John Russell took charge of the Foreign Office; Lord Palmerston, who wished to extend his knowledge of general administration, assumed the Home Office; the Duke of Newcastle—the Earl of Lincoln, who had so long been Mr. Gladstone's devoted friend, and who had lately succeeded the famous Tory Duke in his title and estates—became Colonial Secretary; Sir James Graham, another eminent Peelite, took the Admiralty; Mr. Sidney Herbert, also a colleague of Mr. Gladstone's, was Secretary for War; Earl Granville sat as President of the Council; the Duke of Argyle as Lord Privy Seal; the Marquess of Lansdowne (father of the future Governor-General of Canada and India), and a statesman of tried ability, became a member without portfolio.

Such was the constitution of the celebrated Cabinet of all the Talents, as it has been called, half in just admiration for the ability of its members; half in contempt for its general policy and action. In accepting office, Mr. Gladstone had, of course, to seek re-election at Oxford, where his position, by this time, was growing a little doubtful. Lord Derby had just been elected Chancellor of the University in succession to the Duke of Wellington, and there were not a few old-time Tories who would—rightly enough, from their standpoint—have liked to defeat the chief instrument in their leader's compulsory retirement from power. Sir George Cornewall Lewis writes, in a private letter, at this time, a description of Gladstone's connection with Oxford as having exercised a curious influence upon the politics of the University. "Most of his High Church supporters stick to him, and he is Liberalizing them instead of them Tarifying him. He is giving them a push forward, instead of their giving him a pull backward." And then Lewis—himself a sort of philosophical Radical—declares this a critical moment for the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, states that the Ministry he has joined is really a Whig one, and adds that his Conservative friends at Oxford are really following him, instead of taking the opportunity to desert him.

The contest which ensued proved that, in the main, this latter statement was still true. Mr. Gladstone fought the issue—or tried to do so—upon Lord Aberdeen's friendliness to the Church, and his own continued and vehement loyalty to its interests. The result was satisfactory for the moment, although it indicated his gradual drift from old Tory moorings, and the growing public consciousness of the change. In figures, it showed a victory over a son of Spencer Percival—Prime Minister in the reign of George III.—by one hundred votes, as compared with the defeat of Dr. Masham, a University resident, by 400 majority in the preceding year.

The introduction of his first Budget by a public man of great abilities and possibilities is always an important event in the House of Commons. It was especially so in this case, partly because of the reputation which Mr. Gladstone had won in his management of the Board of Trade Department some years before, and partly because of his clever handling of Disraeli's financial scheme and his well-known eloquence of speech. His policy, as eventually proposed to the House on December 18th, 1853, was all in the direction of simplifying the tariff regulations which still existed, lessening the taxation upon various kinds of articles, and lowering charges on such important public interests as those of postal communication and means of locomotion. The deficit thus created was to be met by an increased duty on spirits and an extension of the income tax. The most remarkable feature of his scheme was its bold application of a new principle. For the first time in English financial history, he had disregarded a surplus, increased the income tax, and then, deliberately estimating an additional revenue from certain growing interests, had proceeded to reduce, or absolutely abolish, the duties upon some three hundred articles of consumption and use. It was a daring thing to do, and, had Mr. Disraeli ventured upon it, most people would have characterized the idea as a new ebullition of erratic genius. Yet they accepted Mr. Gladstone's forecast, trusted his predictions, praised his Budget, and eulogized the speaker.

His speech was really a masterpiece of diction and a wonderful example of the power of sweeping the horizon of the financial world, and at the same time discussing the most minute details of fiscal policy. In some way or other, he seemed to have brought the solemn earnestness and high moral tone which had long characterized his speaking upon general topics into touch with the dry details of finance, and to have made the dreary by-ways of the Budget alight with brilliant language and beautiful thought. The House was delighted and the country charmed. The Queen and Prince Albert wrote to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and public men as well as private friends joined in a perfect chorus of eulogy. Greville, whose official position during several reigns and many Ministries has given his diary such unique value, says of Mr. Gladstone upon this occasion:

> "He spoke for five hours, and, by universal consent, it was one of the grandest displays and most able financial statements that was ever heard in the House of Commons—a great scheme, boldly, skilfully, and ably devised, disdaining popular clamour and pressure from without—and the execution of it absolute perfection. Even those who do not admire the Budget, or who are injured by it, admit the merit of the performance. It has raised Gladstone to a great political elevation."

Greville was not always just in his estimate of public men, though he frequently voiced current impressions in a most useful way, and was always acute in his observations. It was he, by the way, that Disraeli once described as "the vainest man in the world—and I have read Cicero and known Bulwer Lytton." But upon this occasion he could make no mistake. All England seems to have been deeply impressed by Mr. Gladstone's evident mastery over figures and strange gift of lucid exposition. That one speech really did establish him as the paramount financier of the age, though, needless to say, such a result was not obtained without vast personal labour and preparation. He has since declared that the work of arranging that part of his scheme connected with the succession duties alone, and carrying them through Parliament, was the most laborious task he ever performed.

Writing in May, after the Budget had won its great success, and was being rapidly carried through the House, Greville records an interesting interview with Sir James Graham, who, it must be remembered, was one of Mr. Gladstone's most intimate friends, and his colleague in various Governments past and to come:

> "He talked of a future head, as Aberdeen is always ready to retire at any moment. I suggested Gladstone. He shook his head, and said it would not do. . . . He spoke of the grand mistakes Derby had made. Gladstone's object certainly was for a long time to be at the head of the Conservative party in the House of Commons and to join with Derby, who might, in fact, have had all the Peelites if he would have chosen to aily himself with them, instead of with Disraeli. . . . The Peelites would have united with Derby, but would have nothing to do with Disraeli."

Under the circumstances, and on the verge of war with Russia, Mr. Gladstone had now established himself as the legitimate successor in national commercial repute of Walpole, Pitt, and Peel. His Budget in 1854 was introduced amid very different conditions, and had to provide for very great contingencies. Fortunately, his expectations concerning the revenue had been more than fulfilled, and he found himself possessed of a surplus of five million dollars between ordinary revenue and expenditure. For the succeeding year, however, he found some twenty millions extra would be required for war purposes, and to meet this the income tax was doubled and certain proposals of a temporary nature made, which the House accepted. Greville, who had during the year heard much depreciation of Gladstone, following upon his first unprecedented success, was won back again by what he terms this "great speech." The Chancellor of the Exchequer, according to the diarist, spoke for nearly four hours, "occupying the first half of the time in an elaborate and not unsuccessful defence of his former measures. This speech, which was certainly very able, was well received, and the Budget pronounced an honourable and creditable one." Mr. Disraeli declared that he would not oppose the statement generally upon patriotic grounds, and it finally passed without serious criticism, other than that which concerned the Government's policy towards Russia and in the Crimea. The history of the causes and results of that sanguinary struggle constitutes another and peculiar chapter in Mr. Gladstone's varied career.

GEORGE HAMILTON GORDON, 4TH EARL OF ABERDEEN,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1852-55.

DANIEL O'CONNELL, M.P.

CHAPTER X.

THE COALITION GOVERNMENT AND THE CRIMEAN WAR.

THE Ministry of the Earl of Aberdeen will always be known in British history for the glories and disgraces of the Crimean struggle. It was the first real war in which England had taken part since the days of Waterloo. It dawned upon the horizon at a time when the new school of thought which denounced all war as unnecessary, costly, and wicked, was making headway in every direction. It came upon the country when utterly unprepared for a life and death conflict with so great a power as the Colossus of the North. It shattered many a dream of universal peace, and brought sorrow to myriads of homes. It injured the reputations of statesmen, revolutionized politics, and preceded a period of war in Italy, rebellion in India, and struggles between various European nations.

The spell of forty years was rudely broken. Instead of the rainbow of peace in the sky appeared the lurid storm-cloud from the East. The war came upon a Government composed of the ablest men in British politics, with the exception of Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli; it found the country in a prosperous condition; and it was entered into with the people eager, and more than eager, to defend their rights and compel international respect. Yet no war in modern history has seen so many disasters and been so vigorously denounced; no struggle has ever been more unfortunately mismanaged, or witnessed more heroic episodes and glorious victories. It presents a record full of inconsistencies, and a perfect patchwork of good and evil.

The conflict had its origin in one of those little side issues which find at times so great a place in what is called the Eastern Question. In this case it was a development out of the historic and natural antagonism between the Turk and the Christian, and revived in memory the days of the Crusades. The Greek and Roman Churches claimed from the Turkish Government the custody of those sacred spots in Jerusalem which are associated with the earliest and most memorable events of Christian growth. Both pressed their claims with energy, and ultimately the one was supported by Russia and the other by France. Naturally, the Ottoman Government was indifferent to a great degree, and probably had little real objection to the Holy Places being cared for by one or other, or both the contestants. For a time, therefore, the dispute only served the diplomatic purpose of promoting friction between two great European powers, and pleased Turkey, rather than the reverse.

But when Russia added to her claims in Palestine the demand for recognition of a protectorate over all the Greek subjects of the Porte, under a disputed clause in the old Treaty of Kainardji, the case became critical, and war imminent. On the 2nd of July, 1853, all negotiations having failed, the Russian troops crossed the Pruth and took possession of Moldavia and Wallachia. Three months later the Sultan formally declared war. There can be no doubt as to where the original responsibility for the struggle, and its consequences, must be placed. Nicholas I. of Russia was a magnificent type of the semi-barbarous and entirely irresponsible Eastern despot. Strong in ambition, he was at once daring and timid in character. With a splendid physique, noble bearing, and marked dignity of manner and charm of conversation, he had made a very considerable impression upon the public during his English visit of 1844.

His admiration for England was, indeed, very great; his ideal hero is said to have been the Duke of Wellington; his strong desire was an English alliance. But above and beyond all else was his passionate wish to extend the bounds and the power of the Russian Empire. The intense ambition of Peter the Great and of Catharine II. seemed to be combined in his character, and the partition of Turkey and acquisition of Constantinople had become the cardinal points in his policy. Englishmen he did not understand, in spite of his friendly relations with their leaders. During his visit to London he had talked much with Lord Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, and had become convinced that his suggestions concerning the future had been favourably received, and would, when the time came, be acted upon. Accustomed to surroundings where his wish and will were absolute law, he did not see that a courteous reception might also involve the silent dismissal of important suggestions. Lord Aberdeen was, undoubtedly, desirous of conciliating the Emperor, and also appears to have taken a great liking to him personally. Hence, he may have unintentionally aided in giving the Czar the impression which he certainly had, that England was willing to share in the spoliation of Turkey, or, at the very least, that she would not seriously oppose Russian policy in that direction.

When he discovered his mistake, and found that the courteous attention given to the statement of his views by Lord Aberdeen, the Duke of Wellington, and others, had not involved their acceptance, or even favourable consideration, only one result was possible in the existing tension, and with the fierce temper and hereditary tendency to madness which the Czar possessed. And many things had combined to encourage this unfortunate belief of his, and the corresponding anger of disappointment. His memorandum concerning the understanding which he thought existed between the Governments of Russia, Austria, and Great Britain, in the event of a revival of the Turkish trouble, had been filed in the archives of the Foreign Office, without the vigorous protest and reply which should have been despatched. His famous interviews, in January, 1853, with Sir Hamilton Seymour, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, showed that he not only believed the time had come for taking "the sick man's" effects, but that he felt sure of English co-operation in the division of the spoils.

The claims of Russia in connection with the protection of Greek Christians in Turkey were purely a pretext for intervention in the affairs of another nation. No Turkish sovereign could possibly admit the right of a foreign ruler to control his subjects within the bounds of the Turkish Empire. The dignity and independence of Turkey would have been absolutely lost by the slightest admission in that direction. Lord Clarendon, just before the war, in writing, as Foreign Secretary, to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, at Constantinople, had declared that "if such a concession were made the result would be that fourteen millions of Greeks would henceforward regard the Emperor as their supreme protector, and their allegiance to the Sultan would be little more than nominal, while his own independence would dwindle into vassalage." But it must be said that Mr. Gladstone looked at the question differently. He contended that the terms of the treaty between Russia and Turkey in 1774 justified the former's demand. It all turned upon the interpretation of a certain clause, and the feeling of Europe and apparent agreement of history has decided that Russia was wrong. Mr. Gladstone, however, remained consistent in a steady presentation of his view, although the later aggressive actions of the Czar made him support the war, which became eventually necessary.

Meantime statesmen hesitated and ministers negotiated while the whole matter was passing slowly but surely out of their hands. England and France had agreed to unite in the protection of Turkey from dismemberment. An unsuccessful conference had taken place at Vienna between representatives of Great Britain, France, Austria, and Prussia, concerning the affairs of Turkey and Russia. On October 12th following, and shortly after the Turkish declaration of war, Mr. Gladstone spoke at Manchester during the unveiling of a statue to Sir Robert Peel. It was natural, and indeed necessary, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should deal with a subject which the public was now discussing with unexampled eagerness and excitement.

His references were neither soothing nor peaceable. He described Russia, in a way not unlike that of Lord Beaconsfield twenty years afterwards, as a power which threatened to over-ride Europe, and menace the peace of the world. The Ministry, however, were very anxious, he declared, to avert war, and all its terrible consequences of bloodshed, crime, and starvation. "No doubt," said the speaker, "negotiation is repugnant to the national impatience at the sight of injustice and oppression; it is beset with delay, intrigue, and chicane; but these are not so horrible as war, if negotiation can be made to result in saving this country from a calamity which deprives the nation of subsistence and arrests the operations of industry. To attain that result, if possible, Her Majesty's Ministers have persisted in exercising that self-command and self-restraint which impatience may mistake for indifference, feebleness, or cowardice, but which are truly the crowning greatness of a great people, and which do not evince the want of readiness to vindicate, when the time comes, the honour of this country."

But it was now becoming impossible to avoid war. On November 30th, 1853, the Russian fleet in the Black Sea had swooped down upon the Turkish squadron of nine war-ships, as they lay anchored outside Sinope. and after a desperate conflict destroyed the whole of them, killing four thousand Turks, and leaving only four hundred survivors—all wounded. This was the famous "massacre of Sinope," which stirred up a tremendous clamour in England against Russia, and was declared to be one of the most treacherous and indefensible acts in all history. As a matter of fact, however, Russia and Turkey were at war, and there was no valid reason why the fleet of one power should not attack the other's ships whenever it found an opportunity. A little later, Napoleon III. made a last effort for peace by a personal letter to the Emperor Nicholas. He offered certain proposals and suggestions, and wound up with the statement that, if these were not accepted, the whole matter would have to be left to the arbitrament of war, instead of to the principles of reason and justice. Naturally, the reply was hostile, and concluded with a reference to the disastrous Russian campaign of Napoleon I. by the pleasant and pointed remark that, no doubt, in any coming struggle, Russia could hold her own in 1854 as well as she did in 1812.

There could be no question as to the result of such a communication, and the French Emperor threw himself enthusiastically into the alliance with England. The ultimatum of the latter power was despatched on February 27th, 1854, in a communication from Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, to Count Nesselrode. The messenger was informed, on reaching St. Petersburg, that the Emperor did not deem it becoming to make any reply, and a few days afterwards the Queen's declaration of war against Russia was read from the steps of the Royal Exchange at London. An official statement in the *London Gazette* followed, giving the reasons for the momentous action. It was declared in this document that events had proved the falsity of Russia's alleged interest in the Christians of Turkey, and had shown that its real object was interference between Turkish subjects and their sovereign. After every effort for peace and settlement of the question, however, Her Majesty now felt called upon:

> "By regard for an ally, the integrity and independence of whose empire have been recognized as essential to the peace of Europe; by the sympathies of her people with right against wrong; by a desire to avert from her dominions most injurious consequences, and to save Europe from the preponderance of a power which has violated the faith of treaties and defies the opinion of the civilized world; to take up arms, in conjunction with the Emperor of the French, for the defence of the Sultan."

Such was the final result of a prolonged period of Ministerial doubt, political hesitation, and national suspense. To Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone, this war was a bitter dose. If the cup could have been refused, they would have been overjoyed. The Premier hated war on principle, and because of the suffering it inflicted upon humanity. His Chancellor of the Exchequer had much the same feeling, coupled with a much more lively conscience. Kinglake, the brilliant historian of the Crimean struggle, describes him, at this period, as possessed of a subtle and microscopic intellect, as delighting in a sort of mental casuistry, and as having, in addition to the most unaffected piety and blameless life, a reputation for conscientious scrupulousness which made him the dread and nightmare of practical politicians—a source of terror to the Tapers and Tadpoles of his time. With Lord Aberdeen and himself, in their wish for peace, were the other Peelites. But against them was the powerful personality of Palmerston.

To the amazement of the country, that statesman had remained, during this period, in the quiet and efficient management of the Home Office. He was the one man whom the nation wanted in control of either the Foreign Office or the War Department, and whom every one expected to see that the national interests during this crisis were resolutely safeguarded. He was known to favour war; he had hastily resigned during the Sinope business, and as hastily resumed office when the British fleet was ordered to the Dardanelles; he was, during the war fever, the darling of the people, and, when the declaration was at last made, became easily the strongest man in the Cabinet and the country. But, even after the Rubicon was crossed, Ministers appear to have differed concerning the objects and nature of the struggle. Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone still sympathized with the Christians of the Turkish provinces, and looked upon the war as a bad means to the good end of obtaining for them better government. Lord Palmerston, on the contrary, detested Russia, and liked Turkey; thought the Christian complaints a humbug, and Russia's pretended interest in them a solemn farce.

This view was the popular one. It had been embodied in the official reasons for the war, and was accepted by the public generally. But the differences of sentiment and opinion in the Cabinet were most disastrous. They prevented due preparation for the inevitable struggle, hampered the efficient carrying on of the campaign, and hindered the popular enthusiasm from finding organized military expression. The lack of preparation, however, was the fatal central cause of all the troubles which followed. For it the Aberdeen Ministry are not altogether to blame. Prior to the development of this particular war fever, popular opinion had begun to look upon peace as almost a fixed condition of affairs. The Peace Society had made so much noise that many people thought the days of battle were gone forever. Bright and Cobden, and to some extent Gladstone himself, had preached the doctrines of peace and good-will amongst men, until foreign nations and papers had got into a way of asserting that England would never fight again. Hence the natural belief of many members of the Government that they would somehow pull through without war. Hence the plunge into a great struggle with a peace establishment of nearly forty years' standing. Hence the natural break-down which followed. And for the result, if blame is to be personally placed, it seems right that a share should be awarded to Lord Palmerston, the popular war Minister, at least as great as that soon to be given Lord Aberdeen, the unpopular peace Minister. The one wanted and expected war, and did not organize any efficient preparation; the other did not want war, naturally hoped that there would be none, and therefore did not prepare for it.

The campaign which followed, and which commenced by the landing of 27,000 English troops, 30,000 Frenchmen, and 7,000 Turks, on the bleak shores of the Crimea, in the middle of September, 1854, is now a part of universal history. Sebastopol was the point aimed at by the Allies, and around that great arsenal and fortress of Russian power in the Black Sea waged the ensuing struggle. The gallant contest and final victory at the Alma; the battle of Balaclava, with the memorable charge of the noble six hundred; the battle of Inkerman; the prolonged siege of Sebastopol; the vain expedition of Sir Charles Napier to the Baltic; the coming of little Sardinia to the support of the Allies, as a means of asserting its European position; were all important incidents of the great conflict. But against all the glories won by the soldiers in battle stood the black shadow of sickness and starvation, caused mainly by the absolute failure of the British commissariat department. Cholera and disease created more havoc amongst the Allies than did Russian guns, and all the labours of a Florence Nightingale could do no more than alleviate individual cases of suffering.

Naturally, the long delay in capturing Sebastopol, followed by tale after tale of mismanagement and distress, caused a popular reaction against the Ministry. The people grew restless, and Parliament anxious. The greater the fervour and enthusiasm with which a people plunge into war, the stronger becomes the feeling of disappointment if practical successes are not won, or if a national break-down in any direction is indicated. Glory might be won by victories in battle, but no useful result could follow until Sebastopol was captured. So while Nicholas of Russia was dying of a broken heart and beaten ambition, the English people were preparing for vengeance upon some one—they did not care very much whom.

Meantime, Mr. Disraeli was vigorously and constantly attacking the Ministry; claiming that the war would never have occurred had a strong Government been in power; and alleging that its mismanagement was due to conflicting interests and ideas within the Cabinet. Sir Theodore Martin, in his Life of the Prince Consort, gives to the world correspondence which shows how anxious the Queen was for an active and efficient conduct of the war, and that, upon the whole, she trusted Lord Aberdeen, despite his known aversion to the contest in the first place. But he could not control his colleagues, and in January, 1855, the crisis was precipitated by a letter from Lord John Russell to the Premier, urging that Lord Palmerston be transferred to the War Office in place of the Duke of Newcastle. The latter offered to resign and become the scapegoat of the Ministry, but naturally this was refused, and the Cabinet decided to hold together as it was, with the exception of Lord John, who promptly and characteristically threw up his post.

This action of the leader of the Government in the House of Commons, in the teeth of Mr. Roebuck's impending motion for the appointment of a Select Committee "to inquire into the condition of our army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it has been to minister to the wants of that army," was, of course, a most disastrous, as well as an unexpected, blow. It greatly prejudiced the position of the Ministry at a moment when the most strong and united front was required. It made the result of the ensuing debate doubtful. It hampered the spirited defence of the Government by Mr. Gladstone during the discussion, and seemed to show that there really was some cause for the prevailing lack of confidence. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech was a fairly strong one. He declared the state of affairs in the Crimea to be greatly exaggerated, maintained that the condition of the 30,000 British troops now before Sebastopol compared favourably with that of the French, admitted that the administration of the War Department at home might have been somewhat ineffective at first, but declared that great improvements had been carried out, and that there was nothing to really deserve censure. He also announced that affairs at the seat of war were getting better, and that the evils complained of were being greatly alleviated.

Mr. Disraeli followed and denounced the Government as a "deplorable" one, and Lord John Russell's conduct as "profligate intrigue." The latter, who at the moment had few friends in the House, defended himself as best he could, and the debate was closed by a strong appeal from Lord Palmerston, against the principle and object of the Roebuck motion. When the division had taken place, it was found that 305 members had voted for that motion, and declared their want of confidence in the Aberdeen administration, while only 148 had supported the Government. There was no cheering when the result was announced. Amid dead silence, the House heard that the great Ministry of all the Talents, the Coalition which had assumed office with such fair prospects and such high expectations, had come to an overwhelming and disastrous end. The Speaker declared the figures again, and still no one seemed to know exactly how the news should be received, till somebody laughed; then the House gave way, and shouts of laughter rang the knell of the formidable Coalition, whose triumph Disraeli had prophesied two years before would be but brief.

For a while all was confusion. The Queen sent for Lord Derby, as the leader of the largest single section in the House, and he offered Lord Palmerston the leadership of the Commons, which Mr. Disraeli was willing to forego, under the circumstances. But Palmerston, Gladstone, and Sidney Herbert did not see their way to proffer more than an independent support. The Conservative leader had, therefore, to give up the task, telling Her Majesty, incidentally, that this offer of "independent support" reminded him of the definition of an independent M.P.—one who could not be depended upon. Then the Queen sent for Lord Lansdowne, a veteran statesman who had the respect of every one, but whose health was poor. He found that Lord John Russell would not act, because he thought he could himself form a Ministry. So the opportunity was given him; but, of course, he failed. Few of the leaders cared to serve with the man who had just helped to pull down the Ministry of which he had been so prominent a member. Meantime, a week had passed, and England, in the midst of war, was really without a Government. It commenced to look as if the prophecy made by Mr. Gladstone in the Roebuck debate was being fulfilled, and that the "inquiry" would, indeed, lead to nothing but "confusion and disturbance, shame at home, and weakness abroad."

Finally, Lord Palmerston was sent for, and on the 6th of February his Ministry was announced. Mr. Gladstone remained Chancellor of the Exchequer. The principal change was in the War Office, which was given Lord Panmure, better known, perhaps, as Mr. Fox Maule. A week later the new head of the Government wrote to his brother: "A month ago, if any man had asked me to say what was one of the most improbable events, I should have said my being Prime Minister. Aberdeen was there; Derby was head of one great party, John Russell of the other, and yet in about ten days' time they all gave way like straws before the wind." He at once took action. A sanitary commission was sent to the Crimea, and another commission appointed to look after the Commissariat. Meantime, he strove to persuade the House not to press the motion for an inquiry. When, however, it became clearly impossible to resist the determination of the members, Lord Palmerston gave way, and Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham at once resigned.

They had hesitated about joining the reconstructed Ministry at all, feeling that its existence was practically a censure upon Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle. But the two Peers had urged them not to let personal matters interfere with the formation of a strong Government, and they had finally consented to join on the understanding that Mr. Roebuck's motion would not be pressed. But Palmerston had found himself powerless. The chief new appointment following this action was that of Sir George Cornewall Lewis as Mr. Gladstone's successor. During the debate which ensued upon the fresh presentation of Mr. Roebuck's proposal, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke strongly in opposition. He declared that:

> "The use of a Select Committee, with respect to a military matter, may be wise in certain cases, but is without precedent in a case such as that of the siege of Sebastopol. But I am now an objecting party, not to the mere mode of carrying into effect what is legitimate in itself; I deny that your purpose is legitimate—I deny that you will act either prudently or constitutionally if you investigate, even at the bar of this House, much less if you instruct your Committee to investigate, the state of the army pending a great military operation. . . I do not care one tittle if I am told that unanimity prevails on this subject. Prejudices of that sort will soon be dissipated."

Of course Mr. Gladstone's criticism was useless, and the Committee became a fact. When its report was ultimately made to the House, it was found to deal frankly enough with the defects of the existing army system, and of the general conduct of the war, but to be very vague in its distribution of the blame.

Meantime, the Emperor Nicholas had died, and Lord John Russell had been sent to a new Conference at Vienna to see if anything could be done in the way of peace. The gathering proved a failure, and the whole mission a *fiasco*, but it was important as presenting the famous Four Points once more as a basis for subsequent negotiations. These were as follows:

I. That Russia should abandon all control over the Provinces of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia.

II. That Russia should relinquish her claims to control the mouths of the Danube.

III. That all treaties giving Russia a preponderance in the Black Sea should be abrogated, and the sea itself neutralized.

IV. That Russia should renounce the claim she made to an exclusive right to protect the Christians in the Ottoman dominions.

Then followed, in September, 1855, the withdrawal of the Russians from Sebastopol, and the march of the Allies into the fortress which they had so desperately stormed, and shelled, and suffered, to obtain.

This practically ended the war. It, however, began a period of negotiation and of Parliamentary debate, which resulted incidentally in bringing Mr. Gladstone considerable unpopularity. He suddenly assumed a pronounced position against any further continuation of the struggle. During his speech upon a motion to censure the Palmerston Ministry early in 1856, he announced that, "when a member of the late Government, he was in favour of limiting the power of Russia in the Black Sea, but he now thought that such a proposition involved a great indignity upon Russia." He appealed for peace, and declared that if the war were continued merely to humiliate an adversary, or to obtain military glory, it would be "immoral, inhuman, and unchristian."

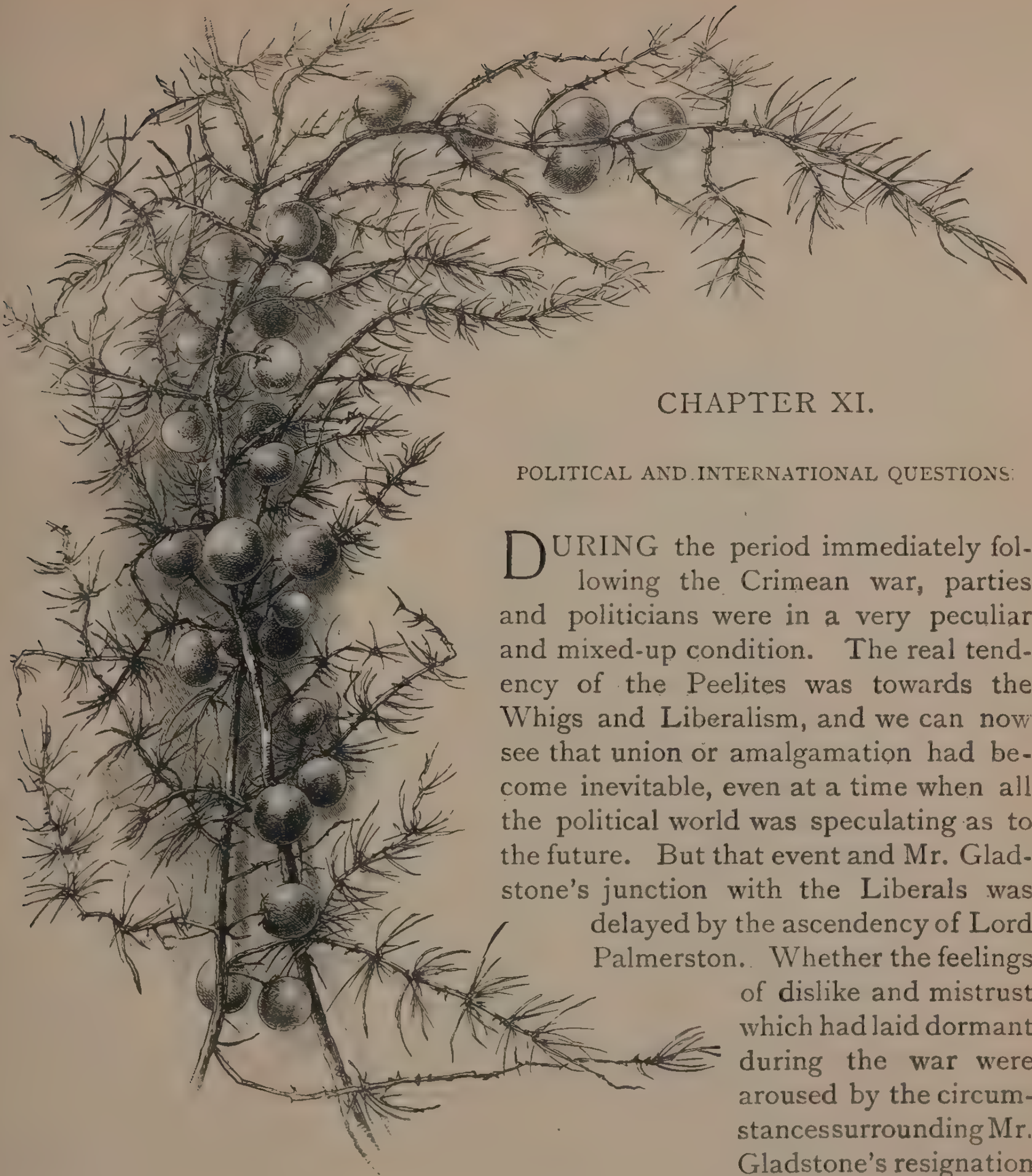
The speech caused great excitement. Prince Albert wrote to Lord Aberdeen expressing reget at its untimeliness, while the *Times* unquestionably represented much contemporary opinion in saying that "we doubt whether the line Mr. Gladstone has selected will be easily forgotten, or regarded as anything else than an unmitigated scandal."

Of course, all kinds of reasons were assigned for a line of conduct which Mr. Gladstone continued to steadily maintain—until peace was finally made, on March 30th; the Four Points, as a whole, obtained; and the ambition of Russia, for the time, effectually checked. Personal hostility to Palmerston was alleged as one cause, but in view of the two having served together harmoniously, so far as the original prosecution of the war was concerned, and the existence of a letter of friendly congratulation, written by Mr. Gladstone in October, 1854, and warmly praising Lord Palmerston for concentrating operations upon Sebastopol, this claim may be considered doubtful. The fact is that Mr. Gladstone had never liked the war, though he believed it a just and necessary one. He had, therefore, gone into it unwillingly, but had tried to do his duty so long as he retained office. Now that he was free, it was natural that every effort toward peace should seem attractive, and every obstacle to that great end unpleasant.

But, at the time, it certainly appeared inconsistent, and he undoubtedly lost ground very greatly in public estimation. It was in reference to this unpopularity of the Peelites, and the unfortunate position of Lord John Russell—a scion of the ducal family of Bedford—after his visit to Vienna, that a popular parody ran:

"Where's Herbert kind, and Aberdeen,
Where's fluent Gladstone to be seen,
Where's Graham now, that dangerous foe,
And where's the Bedford plenipo?"

Upon the whole, the Crimean war is not a pleasant memory for British statesmen. Few of them came through it unscathed in reputation or un-injured in popularity. The lesson of the struggle is so plain that he who runs may read, and it is not likely that a great war will ever again be faced in such a condition of absolute unreadiness. Unfortunately, too, no great general had come upon the scene to rescue the Ministry from its many serious difficulties. Had a Wellington appeared in the Crimea, a vastly different result would have followed. As it was, the soldiers won glory, and the generals, in too many cases, flung away the fruits of victory. In one thing the war was a success. To quote the words of Mr. Gladstone, in an article written during 1877, it "sought the vindication of European law against an unprovoked aggression," and endeavoured "to defend against Russia the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire." These objects it unquestionably obtained.



CHAPTER XI.

POLITICAL AND INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS.

DURING the period immediately following the Crimean war, parties and politicians were in a very peculiar and mixed-up condition. The real tendency of the Peelites was towards the Whigs and Liberalism, and we can now see that union or amalgamation had become inevitable, even at a time when all the political world was speculating as to the future. But that event and Mr. Gladstone's junction with the Liberals was delayed by the ascendency of Lord Palmerston. Whether the feelings of dislike and mistrust which had laid dormant during the war were aroused by the circumstances surrounding Mr. Gladstone's resignation in 1855 cannot now be certainly stated, but there is no doubt that an opportunity was then provided for the full and free expression of the hostility which had first taken form in the early fifties.

The result was a three years' triangular duel between Palmerston, Gladstone, and Disraeli, during which, however, the two latter were more often fighting side by side than against each other. Hence the popular impression that Mr. Gladstone was drifting back to Conservatism. This belief runs through many of the political papers and memoirs of the period. In a conversation published as a magazine article in 1855, Sir Frederic Elliot and Mr. Nassau Senior, both experienced onlookers, express the joint belief that "the secession of Gladstone is a great blow to the Palmerston Government, and a prodigious accession to the Tories." On April 3rd, 1856, Mr. Greville embodies the general feeling in the statement that "Disraeli appears to be endeavouring to approach Gladstone, and a confederacy between those two is by no means an improbability."

Writing on February 6th, 1855, in his diary, Lord Shaftesbury says: "I hear that Gladstone has long exhibited a desire to return to Lord Derby, and I believe it. He would then be leader of the House of Commons and Prime Minister." In 1857, Sir George Cornewall Lewis speaks of him as having "taken the Derbyite turn." And Lord Malmesbury, in his diary, records having met Gladstone at the Carlton Club, and adds that "his leanings are apparently towards us."

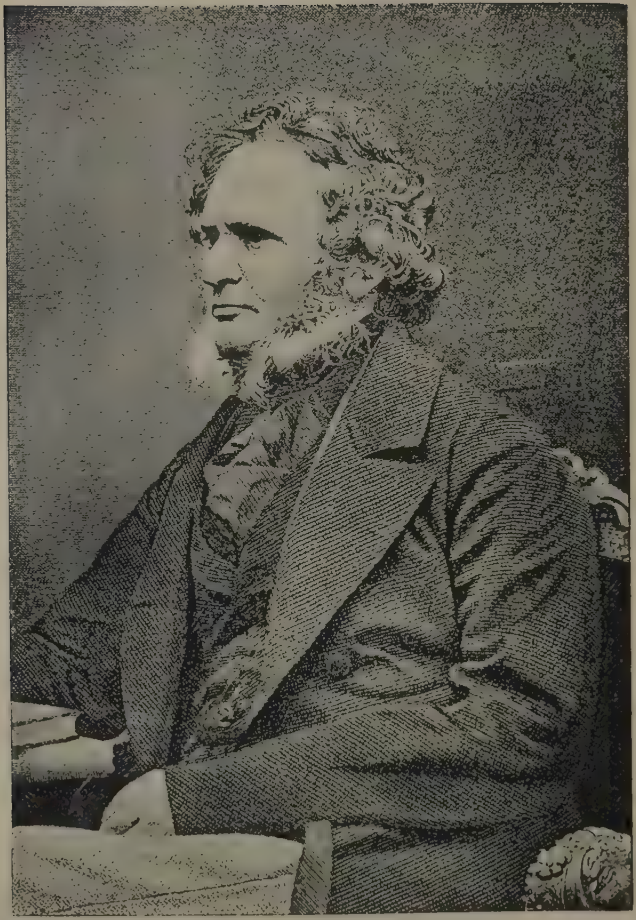
Meantime, by word, and vote, and influence, he was opposing Lord Palmerston. Speaking to an intimate friend in the autumn of 1856, Mr. Gladstone declared that the former had "never been a successful minister," and that he possessed "great love of power, and, even stronger, a principle of false shame; cares not how much dirt he eats, but it must be gilded dirt." Again, towards the end of the succeeding year, he told the same friend that he "greatly felt being turned out of office": "I saw great things to do. I longed to do them. I am losing the best years of my life out of my natural service. Yet I have never ceased to rejoice that I am not in office with Palmerston, when I have seen the tricks, the shufflings, the frauds he daily has recourse to as to his business. I rejoice not to sit on the Treasury Bench with him."

It is probable, from the phrases used on this and other occasions, that the revival of the old antagonism to Palmerston was really connected with the retirement from office in 1855. There must have been something behind the nominal resignation and the cause assigned at the time (acceptance of the Roebuck motion) to warrant the use of such language as the above. But, however that may be, these utterances afford some explanation of the course taken by Mr. Gladstone during the four following years. They give a reason for his working at times with Disraeli, and for his support of the Derby Administration in 1858, as well as for the general belief in his future Conservative affiliation.

Another and a powerful reason for his isolation during this period was his feeling of natural ambition, and a disinclination to accept a subordinate or secondary place. For the moment, therefore, antagonism to Palmerston and the ascendency of Disraeli kept him from joining either of the great parties, and left his mind open to receive the Liberal impressions which ultimately controlled it. And there can be no doubt of his ambition and determination to have first place. Sir James Graham, writing privately to Bishop Wilberforce, in 1856,

HENRY JOHN TEMPLE, VISCOUNT PALMERSTON,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1855-58, 1859-65.



EDWARD GEOFFREY STANLEY, 14TH EARL OF DERBY,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1852, 1858-9, 1867-8.

declared that "Gladstone must rise; he is young, he is by far the ablest man in the House of Commons, and in it, in the long run, the ablest man must lead." Of course, this is the opinion of a warm admirer and friend. Mr. Gladstone, however, knew his own ability, and, indeed, when a man's friends speak and write of him in such terms as these, it would be difficult not to become inoculated with some measure of self-confidence and ambition. No one knew him better at this time than Lord Aberdeen, and he has put on record the following summary of his intentions and position:

> "Gladstone intends to be Prime Minister. He has great qualifications, but some serious defects; the chief, that when he has convinced himself, perhaps by abstract reasoning, of some view, he thinks every one else ought at once to see it as he does, and can make no allowance for difference of opinion. Gladstone must thoroughly recover his popularity. This unpopularity is merely temporary. He is supreme in the House of Commons. The Queen has quite got over her feeling against him, and likes him much."

Meanwhile, the Peelite party was a fluctuating quantity, which gradually lost all force as an organization, and only retained influence through the united action, at times, of the few able men who were once its leaders. The Coalition Government had destroyed it as a party, and this was practically admitted by Lord Aberdeen himself, in a letter to Mr. Gladstone, after the general elections of 1857. He declared therein, that "we must accustom ourselves to the conviction that there is no such thing as a distinctive Peelite party in existence," and even hinted at the advisability of their coming out as Liberals, pure and simple. But Mr. Gladstone was loth to accept either of these conclusions, and still clung to the idea of party independence. He has since described the position of the Peelites during these years—leaders in the House, but without any distinctive mission or following—as that of roving icebergs, on which men could not land with safety, but with which ships might come into perilous collision. Their influence was considerable, but it was used first on one side and then on the other. And, looking back, he defends them upon general grounds, but frankly admits that "their political action was attended with much public inconvenience." Indeed, in a private statement to a friend in 1856, he suggested that it would be a great gain if Sidney Herbert and Graham and himself could be taken out of the House, the bag shaken up, and new combinations made.

But, during all these party fluctuations and personal discussions, Mr. Gladstone's position was getting stronger and stronger. He took a most combative share in all the debates of the period, and somebody said regarding his attacks upon the financial schemes of the Palmerston Government that "Gladstone seems bent on leading Sir George Lewis a weary life." Following his resignation of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer came the discussion of the treaty with Russia, and in this he naturally took considerable part, both in self-defence and criticism. Some of the speeches during this debate caused Mr. Milner Gibson to read an extract from a now famous letter written by Sidney Smith to Lady Grey on the general subject of foreign interference. "For God's sake, do not drag me into another war," implored the great Whig humorist. "I am worn down and worn out with crusading and defending Europe and protecting mankind; I must think a little of myself. I am sorry for the Spaniards; I am sorry for the Greeks; I deplore the fate of the Jews; the people of the Sandwich Islands are groaning under the most detestable tyranny; Bagdad is oppressed; I do not like the present state of the Delta; Thibet is not comfortable. Am I to fight for all these people?"

And this utterance, sarcastic and humorous as it was, represented a feeling which was destined to grow in volume and influence, and to affect the future interests of struggling Poland and the territorial strength of gallant little Denmark. Incidentally, Mr. Gladstone spoke warmly in favour of arbitration, but limited the application of the principle to cases where the claims on both sides had been reduced to a minimum, and brought to a state in which each party was conscientiously prepared to resort to force, if need be, for a settlement. Otherwise, trumped-up and untenable claims would be submitted for arbitration, and in the end trouble be promoted rather than averted.

Early in the session of 1856, Lord John Russell introduced a series of resolutions regarding National Education, which, though defeated by a large majority, had the effect of bringing out a strong opposing speech from Mr. Gladstone. He evidently feared that the Church of England schools and the mixed system of education was threatened, and this afforded opportunity for a renewed tribute of attachment to the Church and State theory. "It had, happily, been found practicable in England," he declared, "to associate together in the most perfect harmony those two principles—the principle of voluntary exertion, through which they might get heart and love and moral influences infused into their school instruction; and the principle of material aid from the State, by which the skeleton and framework of their education were provided." Amongst those who voted with Mr. Gladstone upon this occasion were men of the most generally opposite views—Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Lowe; Lord Robert Cecil (now Lord Salisbury) and Mr. Milner Gibson; Sir James Graham and Lord John Manners.

Following this came a discussion concerning the complaints made by the United States that the British Government permitted and encouraged the enlistment of Americans in the British navy. The dispute, of course, turned upon the interpretation of the term "American citizen," and involved the question of whether a British subject remains a British subject no matter where located or under what conditions. Eventually, the matter was settled by the very satisfactory process of giving up the practice, while maintaining the principle. But Mr. Gladstone could find no good in the Palmerstonian policy. "It appears to me," he said, in a long and able speech, "that the two cardinal aims we should keep in view are peace and a thoroughly cordial understanding with America for one, the honour and fame of England for the other. I am bound to say that in regard to neither of these points am I satisfied with the existing state of things, or with the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. A cordial understanding with America has not been preserved; and the honour of this country has been compromised." He went on to express regret that they could not have a Government founded upon the principles of Sir Robert Peel, and a House relieved of the present disorganization of parties and policies. And this situation finally left him in the unpleasant position of voting against a motion of censure which he thought deserved, because he was not prepared to turn the Government out and replace it by Lord Derby and his friends.

During the session of 1857, the House had the interesting spectacle of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone joining hands to try and defeat the Government upon Sir G. C. Lewis' Budget proposals. The chickens of the Crimean war were now coming home to roost, and the administration of the national finances was by no means easy. Without going into details here, it may be said that, amongst other proposals made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was one by which part of the income tax was to be remitted, and a new duty laid upon tea and sugar. Mr. Gladstone opposed this with force and eloquence. In Sir Robert Peel's time, he declared, they had been called upon to remit indirect taxes, now they were being asked to impose them. "You were then called upon to take a burden on yourselves to relieve the great mass of your fellow-countrymen; now you are called upon to take a burden off the shoulders of the wealthier classes in order that you may impose indirect taxes upon the tea and sugar which are consumed by every labouring family in the country." He concluded with the statement of a belief that by wise economy it was practicable to relieve taxation, to reduce expenditure, and at the same time maintain a surplus. But, despite all his assistance, the Disraeli motion of non-confidence was lost by a large majority.

Shortly afterwards, a measure for the establishment of a Divorce Court was introduced and eventually carried. Mr. Gladstone offered the most strenuous opposition to it, and would accept no compromise with the general principle that marriage was not only a civil contract, but a sacred ordinance. He believed that, by the law of God, no marriage could be so annulled as to permit of re-marriage. He spoke over seventy times upon the various stages of the bill, and opposed it first upon the clear issue of principle, then tried to postpone it for more mature consideration, and, failing in both objects, endeavoured to modify its features and improve or limit its operation. To him, the measure was a retrograde step, pregnant with the most dangerous consequences to the entire social system. "I must confess," said he to the House, in an earnest, passionate, and learned appeal against the bill, "that there is no legend, there is no fiction, there is no speculation, however wild, that I should not deem it rational to admit into my mind, rather than allow what I conceive to be one of the most degrading doctrines that can be propounded to civilized men—namely, that the Legislator has power to absolve a man from spiritual vows taken before God."

In an article contributed to the *Quarterly Review*, he declared that "Christian marriage is, according to the Holy Scripture, a life-long compact, which may sometimes be put in abeyance, . . . but can never be rightfully dissolved." And after failing to throw the measure out of the House upon the ground of principle and religious duty, he urged that, at the very least, the State should not place upon the Church the disgrace of having to re-marry those who had once been divorced. Such an action would "drag the rites of Christianity down to the lowered and lowering level of society." He, therefore, urged that people once divorced should only be permitted marriage again through the medium of a registrar or State official. But it was useless, and all that eloquence, moral sentiment, and Biblical learning could do was in this instance done in vain.

Mr. Gladstone's opinions upon divorce have never since altered, and in 1878 he declared, with regret, that "my conviction of the general soundness of these arguments and anticipations has been too sadly illustrated by the mischievous effect of the measure on the conjugal morality of the country." And to people living in the modern light—or moral darkness—of the American divorce system, with its looseness of family ties, laxity in marriage relations, and absence of respect for the sacred nature of the ordinance, the English statesman's attitude upon this important question will win admiration, if not approval.

It was during this session that Lord Palmerston met a hostile vote in connection with the war in China. The conflict had been inaugurated by the seizure of a Chinese vessel called the "Arrow," while flying British colours, and the Parliamentary debate which followed turned nominally upon the question whether the lorcha had a right to the protection of the British flag or not. In reality, the matter was complicated by China not having adhered to the treaty of 1842, and by the dislike which many members of the House felt for the war of which that treaty was the result, and which had promoted and protected the sale of opium to the Chinese. Mr. Cobden moved a resolution which was really a vote of censure, and which caused an exceedingly brilliant discussion. Mr. Gladstone's speech was an eloquent attack upon the Government and its policy. It was so strong that so friendly and genial a critic as Monckton Milnes declared it to be "superb in extravagance and injustice." He denounced the whole policy of the Ministry in China, thought it opposed to humanity and honour, declared that the British flag had been stained by the aggressive actions of the Government, and appealed to the House to formally disavow those acts and not to mind the effect upon Eastern peoples. To him, in this case, it was duty first and prestige afterwards. He concluded by alleging that upon the ensuing vote depended the question of whether "the miseries, the crimes, the atrocities that I fear are now proceeding in China are to be discountenanced or not."

It was undoubtedly a powerful utterance, and Henry Fawcett—afterwards the well-known Liberal politician—recorded his impression of it at the time in words worthy of recollection:

> "Gladstone's mind is too subtle, but he has made the most effective speech to which the hearer ever listened. It caused a great excitement, and I could not help feeling it was a triumph which you may well devote a lifetime to obtain."

Without going into the merits of the subject, it is clear that Parliament was deeply stirred by the considerations advanced. Lord Palmerston's reply was upon the level of his greater speeches, but the combination against him was too strong, and he found himself in a minority. The House was at once dissolved, and, as it turned out, the Premier was right in believing the country to be with him upon this particular question. The Government gained largely in the elections, and many prominent Liberals—Bright and Milner Gibson, Cobden and Layard, amongst others—were beaten at the polls. Mr. Gladstone was returned unopposed for Oxford University, his colleague on this occasion being Sir William Heathcote, a vigorous Conservative of the older type.

But the victory was not a very lasting one. When Parliament reassembled, in February, 1858, Lord Palmerston introduced his unfortunate "Conspiracy to Murder Bill." It was a consequence, and a not unreasonable one, of the Orsini attempt to destroy the French Emperor. For him the English Premier had always entertained a sentiment of regard, and he was therefore easily induced, by representations concerning the undoubted room and freedom given in England to foreign refugees and plotters, to propose a measure to Parliament which should make conspiracy to murder a felony under British law. At first the proposal was accepted as right and fair, and the preliminary reading of the bill passed by an immense majority. Then came a sudden feeling that this was a sort of French interference with English law; that Lord Palmerston was bending to foreign dictation; that England was to lose her position as the refuge of those in distress, and of all who suffered from the misgovernment of despotically ruled countries. This sentiment spread through the Kingdom like a flash of lightning, and soon permeated Parliament itself.

The Premier refused to bend in the matter, and a vote of censure was at once proposed. Needless to say, Mr. Gladstone joined in supporting it. His speech requires neither praise nor analysis, but George Jacob Holyoke in his autobiography, describes it as being remarkable for "directness, compression, and economy of words." The peroration, however, may be quoted, not only as giving the speaker's opinions upon the question in a brief sentence, but as being instinct with characteristic eloquence and force:

> "These times are grave for liberty. We live in the nineteenth century; we talk of progress; we believe that we are advancing. But can any man of observation who has watched the events of the last few years in Europe have failed to perceive that there is a movement indeed, but a downward and backward movement? There are a few spots in which institutions that claim our sympathy still exist and flourish. They are secondary places—nay, they are almost the holes and corners of Europe, so far as mere material greatness is concerned, although their moral greatness will, I trust, ensure them long prosperity and happiness. But in these times, more than ever, does responsibility centre upon the institutions of England; and, if it does centre upon England, upon her principles, upon her laws, and upon her governors, then I say that a measure passed by the House of Commons—the chief hope of freedom—which attempts to establish a moral complicity between us and those who seek safety in repressive measures, will be a blow and a discouragement to that sacred cause in every country in the world."

Lord Palmerston, in his defence, made a vigorous and somewhat memorable onslaught upon Mr. Milner Gibson, the proposer of the motion. He declared that it was the first time that Mr. Gibson had ever appeared as a champion of the honour of England, and that his policy had always been one of crouching to every foreign power with whom a difference might exist, and that he belonged to a small party who cared nothing if the country was conquered so long as they were allowed to work their mills in peace. He strongly denied the claims and assertions of Mr. Gladstone. But nothing could now alleviate the feeling which had been aroused, and, amid great excitement, it was announced at the close of the debate that the Palmerston Government had been defeated by a majority of nineteen. In that majority were 146 Conservatives, 84 Liberals, and 4 Peelites—the latter being Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cardwell, and Sir James Graham.

Lord Palmerston at once resigned, and the Earl of Derby was sent for by the Queen. Although without a majority in the House, he succeeded in forming a Ministry, which, of course, included Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Strong efforts were made to obtain Mr. Gladstone's adhesion; he was offered the post of Secretary of State for the Colonies, and, a little later, that of President of the Board of Control. Greville, writing on May 23rd, observed that Lord Derby "will get Gladstone, if possible, to take the Indian Board," and went on to declare that the latter's natural course "is to be at the head of a Conservative Government." And some years afterwards, Mr. Disraeli said privately that he himself offered at this time to give way to Gladstone, and "almost went on my knees" in urging him to join the Ministry. But offers and persuasion were alike without avail, though a partial support was promised and given.

Meantime the Indian Mutiny occurred, and with all its horrors of fire and sword, massacre and torture, siege and pillage, had brought home to the English people a perception that the government of the great Eastern Empire required some modification and change. Several measures were introduced into Parliament connected with its proposed transfer from the East India Company to the Crown, and many suggestions were received and discussed. Amongst them was Mr. Bright's proposal that "there shall be no Indian Empire," but a number of separate Presidencies, administered in a sort of semi-independence and isolation. Mr. Gladstone took a prominent part in the debates, and one important amendment, which he carried to the final Indian Bill, must be mentioned, as having a public interest in after years. It was to the effect that "except for repelling actual invasion, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, Her Majesty's forces maintained out of the revenues of India shall not be employed in any military operation beyond the external frontier of Her Majesty's Indian possessions without the consent of Parliament to the purposes thereof."

In one of his speeches upon the general subject, Mr. Gladstone very clearly pointed out what he feared for the future in connection with India. The first great difficulty, to his mind, was in finding some adequate protection for Indian interests against the ignorance, indiscretion, and possible errors of the English people and Parliament. The second was the danger of an undue exercise of British executive power upon the treasury and the army of India. In other words, he entertained an equal dread as to the effect of English democracy and of English aristocracy in legislation dealing with the welfare of the people of the great Eastern Empire. Time has certainly shown some ground for this fear, but the danger seems to have emanated from the rash ignorance of English Radicalism rather than from any other source.

During this session of 1858, Mr. Gladstone further distinguished himself by a speech upon the Eastern Question, and by a motion urging support to the organization and unity of Moldavia and Wallachia, under the auspices of Turkey, and in accordance with the Treaty of Paris. It was a generous proposal, but threatened a reopening of difficulties with Austria and Russia, as well as with Turkey. So it was opposed by Mr. Disraeli, and subsequently voted down. Meantime Mr. Gladstone was giving a general support to the Derby Government, and went to even the length of a speech in favour of Disraeli's Budget. Naturally, his action helped the Ministry very much, and practically enabled it to hold together until the Reform Bill of 1859, and the ensuing crash.

This measure is important as being a Conservative effort to adjust certain admitted electoral defects and requirements; as a forerunner of Gladstone's famous proposals in 1866; and as giving some ground for Disraeli's eventually successful policy in the year following that event. The Derby Government stood pledged to bring in such a bill, and Mr. Bright had been stirring up the country in favour of reform. Upon its terms and reception depended the stability of the Ministry and the settlement of a much-vexed question. There was, consequently, great expectation and excitement in the House when Mr. Disraeli rose to present his scheme on the 28th of February. It was found to be moderate in terms, but not sufficiently so for several old-fashioned Tories, who promptly declared their opposition. By the proposals of the bill the franchise was to be widened and broadened, the identity of the suffrage in towns and counties recognized, and several hundred thousand people added to the lists.

Lord John Russell moved an amendment, which Mr. Gladstone—who had not long since returned from the Ionian Islands—opposed in a moderate speech. He declared himself willing to support the bill in part, but not as a whole. He expressed himself as pleased with the general recognition of reform as a national necessity, but pointed out some proposals in the measure which he could not possibly accept. He would not be a party to the disfranchisement of the county freeholders residing in boroughs, nor to the uniformity of the franchise, nor to any scheme which did not lower the suffrages in boroughs. In dealing with the redistribution of seats, Mr. Gladstone presented a strong plea on behalf of the small nomination boroughs—the pocket constituencies. He instanced the cases of Mr. Pelham and Lord Chatham, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Canning, Mr. Fox and Sir Robert Peel—all of whom were sent to Parliament in this way, and at ages ranging from 21 to 26. "Here are six men," he went on, "whom you cannot match out of the history of the British House of Commons for the hundred years which precede our own day. Every one of them was a leader in this House; almost every one of them was a Prime Minister. All of them entered Parliament for one of those boroughs where influence of different kinds prevailed."

He, therefore, appealed to the House on behalf of these small constituencies as being the nursery-ground in which many eminent men had been trained—"men who not only were destined to lead this House, to govern the country, to be the strength of England at home and its ornament abroad, but who likewise, when they once had the opportunity of proving their powers, became the chosen of large constituencies and the favourites of the nation." This part of his speech is interesting as being one of the last efforts at defending the old nomination system which had given so many great men—including Gladstone himself—to English public life, but had been productive of such numerous and serious abuses. The debate continued for some time longer, but finally Lord John Russell's amendment was carried, and the Government defeated, by a majority of 39. Lord Derby at once appealed to the country, and on the meeting of the new House in June was beaten by a small majority in an amendment to the address moved by Lord Hartington. The Premier then resigned. Lord Palmerston was sent for, and succeeded in forming a strong Government, and one which lasted till his death in 1865. Mr. Gladstone accepted the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Russell became Foreign Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle took the Colonial Department, and Sidney Herbert that of War. Mr. Gladstone sought re-election at Oxford, and was successful by a small majority over the Marquess of Chandos, afterwards Duke of Buckingham.

This was a most important moment in his career. The Peelite party was dead and buried. The Peelite leaders were now incorporated in a Whig Government, which made not the slightest pretence at being a coalition. Mr. Gladstone's tendency towards Liberalism was settled publicly and definitely, and the brief alliance with Disraeli had not only been discarded, but was to be replaced ere long by a rivalry far more keen than had ever before existed between the two men. His coming budgets and brilliant financial victories, the commercial treaty with France, and repeal of the Paper and other duties, were to prove this change as genuine, and make Mr. Gladstone's position in the party, permanent.

The personal antagonism to Lord Palmerston was not obliterated. It was only concealed, and during the next few years was destined to flare up at times in very evident and pronounced ways. The only possible explanation of Mr. Gladstone being willing to serve under that leader at all is to be found in his personal and very proper ambition. He was now admittedly close to the Whigs in political feeling, though various causes had combined to make him oppose them for a period. Not long before this he had declared himself "a Conservative in sentiment, but a *Liberal in opinion*." To refuse public admission of this fact by the acceptance of office was to debar himself from political advancement. There was certainly no room for him in the Conservative party. He would not serve under Disraeli, and could not serve in the same Ministry as his equal. And, in the Whig party, Lord Palmerston was now an old man, and Lord John Russell without very great political weight or popularity. Here, therefore, was his opening for eventual leadership—and he took it.

Those who wish to blame Mr. Gladstone for the change of political opinion, which this event marked and helped to further accelerate, must denounce half the statesmen in English history. With Sir Robert Peel's frequent changes the whole world is familiar. Lord Palmerston himself was originally a Tory, and Lord Brougham has been, politically, all things to all men. Charles James Fox began life as a Tory, and ended it as leader of the Whigs. Canning himself was brought up under Whig guidance, and became, ultimately, the hope of the newer and better Toryism. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (first Lord Lytton) commenced as a Radical, and afterwards became a Conservative Minister. Lord Derby himself ended as a Tory Premier the public career which he had begun as a Whig. Lord Hartington, who, years after this time, led the Liberal party in the Commons, lived, as Duke of Devonshire, to take his place in a

Conservative Government; while Joseph Chamberlain, beginning public life as a Radical and a Republican, was developed by circumstances into practically a Conservative, and certainly a loyalist. But, whatever opponents might say in the present, or critics allege in the future, Mr. Gladstone had now taken his position, and commenced the second period of his political development.

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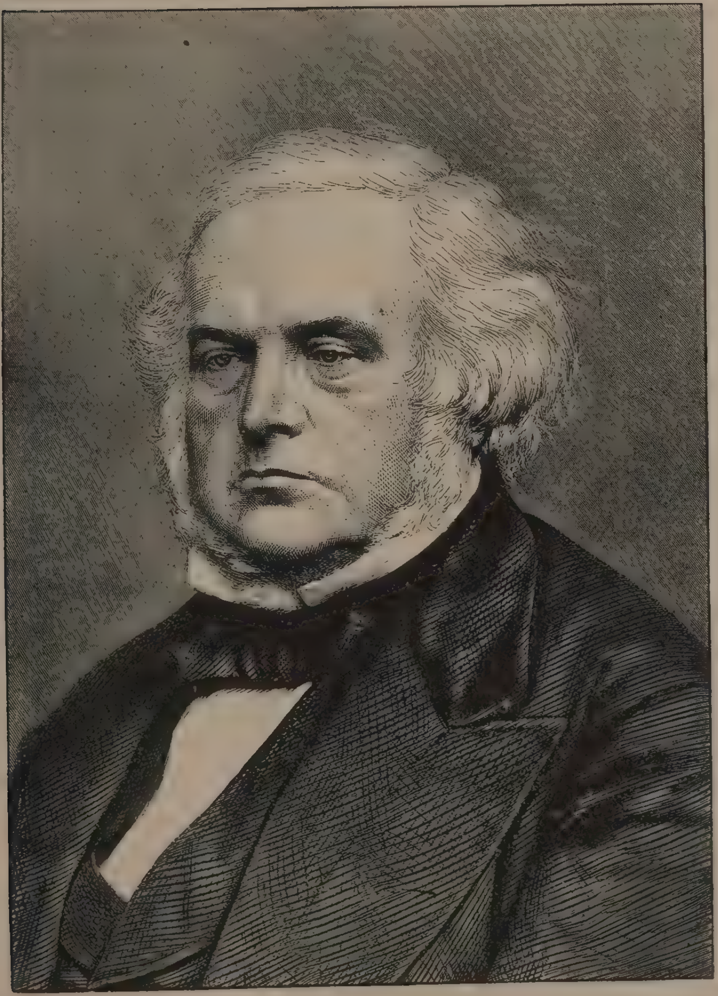
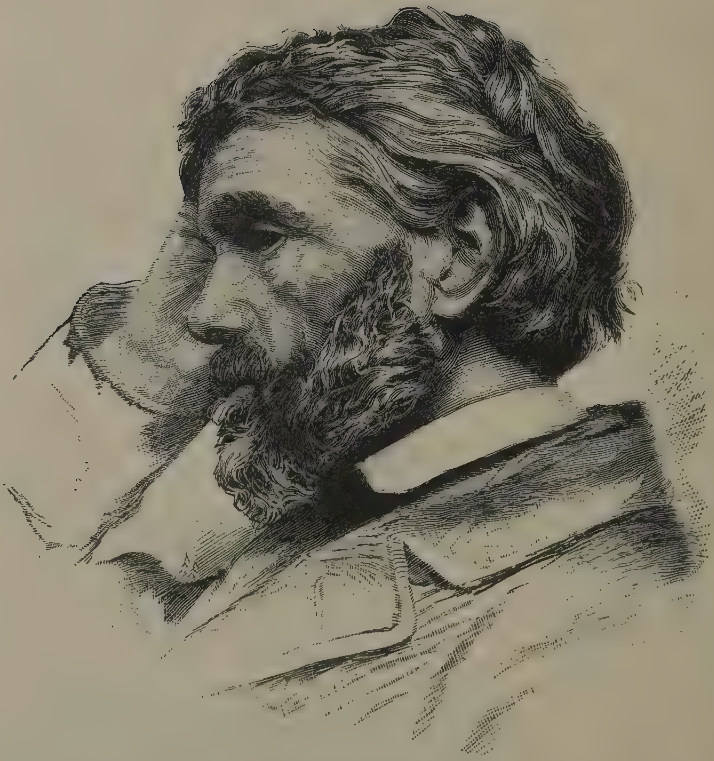


THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BRIGHT, M.P.



THOMAS CARLYLE.

CHAPTER XII.

HOMERIC STUDIES AND GRECIAN LITERATURE.

TO Mr. Gladstone, Homer has presented a study of inexhaustible fascination. Those great epics of the world's earlier days have been his chief intellectual recreation, and his most important subject of literary treatment. The wrath of Achilles and the death of Hector; the voyages and adventures of Ulysses; the destruction of Troy; the thunderbolts of the Olympian gods; have appealed to him with an intensity of charm which those who have not followed the mazes and beauties of the Homeric poems would find it hard to understand.

The Iliad and the Odyssey have furnished food for much discussion, and been the subject of many translations before Mr. Gladstone appeared upon the stage as an authority on Homer and Grecian literature. Chapman and Hobbes, Pope and Cowper, had done good service, while the Earl of Derby's translation of the Iliad, in 1864, showed that the Tory leader possessed culture and literary power as well as oratorical brilliance and dash. But no one had taken hold of a subject which has attracted scholars in all ages so fully and enthusiastically as Mr. Gladstone has done. He believes the ancient world to be revealed in these poems. To him they have afforded an immense field for research and speculation, in history, geography, and national instincts, as they appeared in the olden times. He has endeavoured to trace the influence of the literature, theology, and laws of those days, as given in the Homeric writings of—presumably—nine hundred years before Christ, upon the people and religions of eighteen hundred years after Christ. He has mastered this almost illimitable subject as perhaps no one else has succeeded in doing, and yet he would be the first to confess that the vast expanse of the ocean of knowledge still, in this connection, practically rolls in unexplored waves upon the shores of his mind.

His studies upon Homer and the early literature and religions of Greece have been numerous and voluminous. His theories in various successive works published in 1858, in 1869, in 1876, and in 1890, have been elaborate, clever, and founded upon an undeniable and absolute knowledge of the text. They have been received with respect by the most learned and competent authorities, and while not always accepted—and in that they only follow the fate of every theory that has ever been advanced—have vindicated the place and position of the greatest of human poets, and done justice to his personality and age.

The first point that impresses the student of Mr. Gladstone's character or career in this particular connection is his enthusiasm. He displays it in every page of his many writings upon the subject, and seems to honestly love the name of Homer, and to positively venerate the Homeric poems. His greatest work was perhaps his first one, "Studies on Homer, and the Homeric Age." It was published in 1858, in three large volumes, and showed that his years of Opposition had been occupied in laborious research and elaborate effort. We are carried in this work into another world, and find ourselves, as Mr. Gladstone himself points out, amidst a stream of ideas, feelings, and actions entirely different from what are to be found anywhere else. They form a new and distinct standard of humanity, many of them being fresh and bright for application to all future generations of men. Others seem to "carry us back to the early morning of our race, the hours of its greater simplicity and purity."

He believes it impossible to over-estimate the value of this primitive representation of humanity in so complete and distinct a form, and with its own religion, ethics, history, arts, and manners fresh from the anvil of the times, and true to the hand of its maker. This picture of a passing panorama of events, this representation of the life of a people, makes Homer, in the opinion of Mr. Gladstone, "the greatest chronicler that ever lived," while at the same time he has produced "an unsurpassed work of the imagination." And, no doubt, it is this curious combination of fact and fiction, this picture of history, and vivid use of the powers of imagination, which has made the study of his writings so fascinating to both scholars and statesmen.

But to return to our author. The purely technical portions of his "Studies on Homer" were important, but, of course, uninteresting to the general reader. There was the myriad detail of learned discussion which required treatment, and the expression of his own views upon the general Homeric controversy, the probable trustworthiness of the text, and the proper place of the poet in legend or history. In the second and more widely attractive part of his work, he dealt with the desirability of extending the study of these immortal poems, makes a powerful plea for classical education, and endeavours to place Homer upon a pinnacle of literary, historical, and critical greatness.

Perhaps no single opinion will carry more weight regarding the nature and value of Mr. Gladstone's studies in this connection than that of the late Edward A. Freeman. No historian can escape criticism, and Mr. Freeman certainly has not done so, but his critical views upon any historical topic are worthy of the greatest attention and respect. He has described these three volumes as being great, but unequal, and as being creditable even to one whose whole life had been spent in the pursuit of learning. But as the work of one who maintained a high position in oratory and statecraft they were "altogether wonderful." He did not think that Mr. Gladstone's two characters of scholar and statesman had been aught but a help and strength to him. Long experience with the world must have taught him to better appreciate Homer's wonderful knowledge of human nature, while the practical aspect of the poems and their deep moral and national lessons would be far more real to a busy public man in touch with the activities of modern life than they would have been to a mere solitary student.

And he thought it probable that familiarity with so much that was elevating in principle and noble in style might have had some effect in lending inspiration to Mr. Gladstone's political oratory. "What strikes one more than anything else," he goes on to say, "throughout these volumes, is the intense earnestness, the loftiness of moral purpose, which breathes in every page. He has not taken up Homer as a plaything, nor even as a mere literary enjoyment. To him the study of the Prince of Poets is clearly a means by which himself and other men may be made wiser and better." Mr. Freeman then pointed out sundry important matters in which he differed from the author, but, as a whole, he considered "these noble volumes" to be a wonderfully fresh and genial tribute to ancient literature, and of much real value.

Mr. Gladstone treats in these pages of many important matters. One of the most interesting is the relationship borne by the Greek mind and thought, philosophy, and mythology, to the civilization and Christianity of the modern world. In comparing the poems of Homer with the sacred literature of the Jews, he proclaims the impossibility of putting any mere human writings in competition with the Old Testament, as the great basis and code of truth and hope. But in another direction he does compare them: "The Mosaic books, and the other historical books of the Old Testament, are not intended to present, and do not present, a picture of human society, or of nature drawn at large. Their aim is to exhibit it in one master relation, and to do this with effect they do it to a great extent exclusively. The Homeric materials for exhibiting that relation are different in kind, as well as in degree; but as they paint, and paint to the very life, the whole range of our nature, and the entire circle of human action and experience, at an epoch much more nearly analogous to the patriarchal time than to any later age, the poems of Homer may be viewed in the philosophy of human nature as the complement of the earliest portion of the sacred records."

Speaking a few years later (1865) to the students of Edinburgh University, Mr. Gladstone amplified his statements concerning the theological teachings of Homer. He described them as embodying what may be termed the Olympian system of religion. That system exhibited a kind of royal or palace-life upon a more majestic scale than would be humanly possible. It was much more splendid and powerful, more intense and free. It was a wonderful and gorgeous creation, answering in many ways to the use of that English word "jovial," which emanates from the Latin name of the greatest of Olympian gods. In this religion was to be found and enjoyed a life charged with all the pleasures of mind and body; a life of banquet and revel and music and song; a life in which serious splendour alternated with jest and gibe; a life of childish wilfulness and forgetfulness, combined with solemn, manly, and imperial cares. Yet in the poetic debates of the gods on Mount Olympus justice was made, in the end, to win. It was in brief, and in Mr. Gladstone's own words, "a religion of intense humanity, alike in its greatness and littleness, its glory and its shame."

But this is a digression. Returning to the volumes in hand, we find a strong appeal for recognition of the high place which Homer should hold in education. Mr. Gladstone thinks the poems are far superior for this purpose, and especially as practical helps and models in Greek composition, to the tragedies of a later period. With the exception of Aristotle and Plato, no ancient author offers so wide a field of labour and inquiry, while, in another direction, "He is second to none of the poets of Greece, as the poet of boys; but he is far advanced before them all—even before Æschylus and Aristophanes—as the poet of men." In the public schools, therefore, he should be read and studied for his diction and poetry; in the universities, because of his poetic skill and delicacy, and the marvellous lessons which he funishes upon manners, arts, and society.

As to the general Homeric question, the author stated his views strongly. He believes the poems to have been, in the main, historical, where they were not essentially religious, and in proof of this cites the great number of Homer's genealogical lists and their remarkable consistency one with the other. He speaks of the accuracy with which the names of races are handled; the specific details of family history interspersed throughout the text; the numerous legends or narratives of prior occurrences which are given. He thinks it a fair inference from the Odyssey that the deeds of the Trojan war were sung and listened to by the men and the sons of the men who waged it. And he points out that some of the signs of historical accuracy in the narratives are preserved even at an apparent sacrifice of poetic beauty.

Mr. Gladstone then amplifies his opinions upon the trustworthiness of the text, and declares that the only safe and true method of study in the case of the Homeric poems is to adopt the text itself as the basis, and not the mild or wild theories of innumerable writers, each belonging to some distinct school, or following some peculiar branch of inquiry. This is, of course, an obviously easy way to dispose of all the arguments as to lack of genuineness in the text itself. He also thinks that the poet's identity with the age of which he sings, and the distance in tone and feeling which separates him from the nearest of his followers, indicate the date of the poems and the author's existence as being within a generation or two of the Trojan conflict. He places Homer, therefore, as having lived some generations anterior to Hesiod, and many centuries before the other great Greek writers. "Judging," observes the author, "from internal evidence, he alone stood within the precinct of the heroic time, and was imbued from head to foot with its spirit and its associations."

Much space and learned disquisition is devoted to the composite origin of the Greek race in the mists of antiquity, and to the relationship which their religion, as embodied in these poems, bore to the national circumstances of their early life, and the development of their character and history. It is an important subject, though the ethnology of the prehistoric ages—fascinating as it may be—is altogether too abstruse for any brief analysis. But Mr. Gladstone has not shrunk from the task of making an elaborate criticism and elucidation of what is commonly called a mythical period. He has endeavoured to transform what many consider beautiful abstractions into concrete and very practical realities. That he has not failed is a great tribute to his skill and learning; while the fact of his not having entirely succeeded is due to the presence of difficulties in time and space, and want of documentary evidence, which makes absolute proof impossible.

After dealing with the morals of the Homeric age, the position of women, of politics, of geography, and of the Trojans and Greeks in that time of heroes, Mr. Gladstone treats of the comparative qualities and position of Homer and the Bible. A brief reference to this subject has been already made, but it is worthy of more extended consideration. The author describes the Scriptures and the Homeric poems as both alike opening up a view of the early world to which we have no other literary key. They are, in his opinion, by far the oldest of known compositions, and, while obviously independent in creation and style, are not only never contradictory, but actually, in many important respects, comfirmatory of each other's genuineness and antiquity. Yet, from an historical standpoint and human aspect, they are very unlike:

> "The Holy Scriptures are like a thin stream beginning from the very fountain-head of our race, and gradually, but continuously, finding their way through an extended solitude into times otherwise known, and into the general current of the fortunes of mankind. The Homeric poems are like a broad lake outstretched in the distance, which provides us with a mirror of one particular age and people, alike full and marvellous, but which is entirely dissociated by a period of many generations from any other records, except such as are of the most partial and fragmentary kind. In respect of the influence which they have respectivelly exercised upon mankind, it might appear almost profane to compare them. In this point of view, the Scriptures stand so far apart from every other production, on account of their great offices in relation to the coming of the Redeemer and to the spiritual training of mankind, that there can be nothing either like or second to them."

But despite the fact that absolute comparison is impossible, Mr. Gladstone thinks that the poems bear a unique relation to the Bible in so far as they moulded the mind and nationality of Greece; through Greece exercised a marvellous influence upon the thought and progress of the world; and thus, like the history and discipline of the Jews, "belonged to the Divine plan." While Homer can tell us nothing of the personal relations of God and man, he can tell us everything concerning the natural powers and capacities of human nature. The author goes on to define the respective functions of the Jew and the Gentile in the ancient world, and declares that before the coming of Christ the Divine revelation was in the hands and care of an inferior race, who were practically forbidden to impart it to others, and who were certainly not themselves the leaders of the world. But, on the other hand, the evolution of laws and institutions, of arts and sciences, of models of greatness in genius and character, as intrusted to other peoples, and to Homer, amongst individuals and distinct personalities, was apparently given the most remarkable share in the first portion of this development.

Mr. Gladstone then controverts the idea of Mr. Grote, that Homer has given too great a scope to the sentimental attributes of his subjects, as compared with the very much greater qualifications of decisive action, clear judgment, and clever organization. He claims, with apparently much truth, that the characters of Achilles and Ulysses, and the relations of the Greek chiefs and leaders to one another in that famous campaign under and around the walls of Troy, were marked by both strength and simplicity. The author concludes the third volume of this remarkable product of work, thought, and enthusiasm, with a clear analysis of the Iliad and its plot; a vivid handling of some of the leading Trojan characters—Hector, Helen, Paris; and a striking comparison of Homer with Milton, Dante, Virgil, and Tasso. The latter is a very striking effort, and constitutes a valuable critical estimate of the great epic poets. Many do not agree with the places assigned to their favourites, but all must admit the clearness and force of the argumentative analysis.

Following this important contribution to Homeric literature came an article in the *Quarterly Review* upon Lachmann's Iliad; an article in *Macmillan's Magazine* upon "The Dominions of Odysseus"; a Preface to Dr. Schliemann's "Mycenæ"; and a small volume of personal translations from the first volume of the Iliad. A much more elaborate work followed in 1869. It had been prepared during the Parliamentary recesses of the two previous years, and was entitled "Juventus Mundi: Gods and Men of the Heroic Age in Greece." In this the author embodied the studies and ideas of his previous and larger work; presented some modifications of opinion; and urged the necessity and desirability of educated persons examining the text fully and carefully, even though "the very splendour of the poetry dazzles the eye, as with whole sheets of light"

Mr. Gladstone deals at length in this book with the historic character which he claims for the poems; the connection of the Pelasgians, Phœnicians, and Egyptians with the origin of the Greeks and their religion; the Olympian system, its divinities and moral aspects; the ethics and polity of the Heroic Age; the characteristics of the Greeks and Trojans; the geography of Homer; his plots, characters, and similes; his general ideas, principles, and descriptions. This volume gives the reader some comprehension of the supreme interest which the author has taken—and so many others before and since—in the evolution of Grecian mythology into Grecian history. Where the one ends and the other begins is really the central point in Homeric controversy. Mr. Disraeli, in many powerful novels and writings, dealt during his career with the origin, the history, the sacred books, the great achievements, the past power, and present influence, of the Jews. To him everything connected with the Hebrew race, from which he was so proud of having sprung, possessed an intense and abiding fascination. To Mr. Gladstone, however, the Greeks appeared far more interesting as a study, and—aside from religious matters—far more important as a nation and as a national force in the world, than did the Jews.

Certainly their religious system, and theories concerning the creation of the world and the universe, their graphic conceptions of gods and goddesses, of Titans and Cyclops, of tremendous conflicts, of human heroes and inhuman monsters, were the product of a very real mental greatness and power. That vivid picture of a ten years' war between Zeus on Mount Olympus and the Titans on Mount Othrys—when the din of battle resounded throughout the world, when the skies trembled and the mountains shook—is only equalled by some of the noble similes used in the Bible to describe Divine omnipotence. Leaving aside, for the moment, Homer's magnificent descriptions of an ideal or an actual state—whichever they may be considered—Hesiod's later conception of the various ages of the world is very beautiful. He thought there had been first an age of gold, when the state of man was perfect and happy. Then came the silver age, in which the human race deteriorated; the bronze age, in which the decadence became still more evident, and when humanity began to learn the art and practice of war. Then followed the age of heroes—the Homeric age—in which conflict and battle were tempered with justice and honour. And, lastly, there came the iron age, the period known to us in ancient and modern history.

But though only a beautiful theory of the poet, this, like the preceding picture of the voyage of the Argonauts, or the siege of Troy, reveals in some measure the greatness of the Greek mind; explains the interest which Mr. Gladstone felt in those fascinating myths or narratives; and illustrates the influence which ancient Greece has had upon the succeeding annals of the world.

In 1876, amid a nominal retirement from politics, and a very practical intervention in behalf of Bulgaria, Mr. Gladstone published his volume entitled "Homeric Synchronism." He had, in the meantime, contributed a number of articles to the *Contemporary Review* and *Nineteenth Century* upon branches of the subject, and had written an educational work on Homer for Macmillan's series of Literature Primers. In November, 1865, he delivered a most important lecture—as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University—upon "The Place of Ancient Greece in the Providential Order of the World." Mr. James Anthony Froude, who was present, refers to this speech in one of his volumes on Carlyle. "I had been at Edinburgh," says the historian, "and heard Gladstone make his great oration upon Homer. It was a grand display. I never recognized before what oratory could do; the audience being kept for three hours in a state of electric tension, bursting every moment into applause. . . . Perhaps in all Britain there was not a man whose views on all subjects in heaven and earth less resembled Gladstone's than those of the man (Carlyle) whom this same applauding multitude elected to take his place." During a visit to Eton in June, 1879, following, Mr. Gladstone gave another lecture upon the personality of Homer and the nature of his work.

The "Homeric Synchronism" is an inquiry into the period of the poet's existence, and the place which his works should hold in history. It is, in fact, an elaborate and carefully sustained effort to bring the controversy down to a practical level, to connect the Homeric poems by means of internal evidence, and keen, close, examination of the text, with really historic events and personages. Mr. Gladstone reiterates his contention that the poems are in part historical in the highest sense; that there was really a solid basis of fact for the narrative of the Trojan war; that Homer lived within half a century of that event, though he did not himself witness it; and that Assyrian and Egyptian research was now doing much to strengthen these conclusions, and verify the poet's personality and history. Much space in the work is given to a study of the plains and the site of Troy, and of Dr. Schliemann's investigations and discoveries. In one place the author speaks enthusiastically of the interest attaching to the wars and struggles of Grecian national infancy. Usually, he declares, the spectacle of a nation winning position and greatness by war is a somewhat painful one.

But, in the case of the Greeks, the people and their hardy characters were formed amid the continuing stress of danger and difficulties. The voyage of Argo, the march of the Seven against Cadmean Thebes, the enormous and prolonged effort against Troy, were more than mere instances of aggressive warfare or ambitious struggle. "They speak with one voice of one great theme; a steady dedication of nascent force, upon the whole noble in its aim, as well as determined and masculine in its execution. For the end it had in view, during a course of effort sustained through so many generations, was the worthy, the paramount end of establishing, on a firm and lasting basis, the national life. cohesion, and independence."

It will be observed that Mr. Gladstone does not allow himself to entertain much doubt concerning the fact and truth of these magnificent incidents. With characteristic determination, he has convinced himself that the basis is substantially good, and certainly he has, in this case, more than earned the right to make a strong assertion, and to receive all reasonable acceptance for his conclusions. During the early months of 1892, he discussed the Olympian religion with considerable further elaboration in the columns of the *North American Review*. Throughout his many analyses of Homer's writings, the two principles of religion and nationality go together, as they do so greatly in the poems themselves, but in these particular articles the gods of Olympus form the central figures and subject.

He begins with the statement, which had already been made to the boys at Eton in the preceding year, that in his early days he cared little for the Homeric gods, and knew less. He then urges, in a prefatory sort of way, that Homer should not be studied with a view to proving some extraneous theory, but should be "construed by the laws of grammar and history, and by himself, carefully compared with himself." He places the poet, in the general results of his life and thought, upon a pedestal with Buddha, Zoroaster, and Mahomet. His religious system is defined as great, and as far more vivid, and in many ways nobler, than were the creations of the others named. And, if Homer failed to create a religion, he, at least, succeeded in developing, harmonizing, and modifying various racial cults into a broad, though not uniform, scheme.

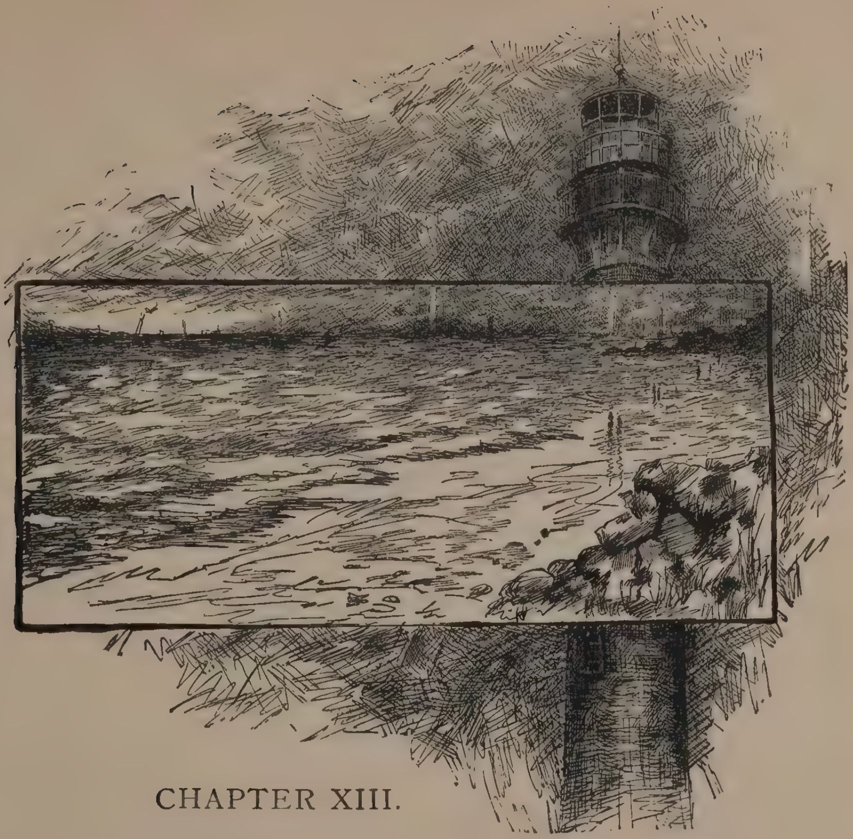
In these essays Mr. Gladstone pictures the power and qualities of the Homeric gods. They were, in the first place, credited with immortality. They existed in the human form, although clothed with an excess of power far beyond that possessed by men. With this god-like influence, however, were coupled very considerable limitations. The deities of Olympus might be wounded, though not killed; they could be foiled in their schemes and enterprises; they had little power of superhuman foresight or prevision. They were also very human in liking good food and drinking nectar and ambrosia. And there could be no doubt concerning their immorality and libertinism. But, upon the whole, the characteristics of the Olympian gods were noble. They were great even in their crimes. The author further asserts that the formation of the system differed very much, and in a marked, systematic, and pervading way, from the characteristics of the Babylonian, Assyrian, or Egyptian religions. He also points out how deliberately Homer makes the Olympian hierarchy constitute a sort of national religion. In the Trojan war, with a temporary exception, all the great and powerful deities are described as being upon the Achaian or Greek side.

And he asserts once more the aim of the poet to have been good and great. In the main, Homer makes the good to triumph and the wrong to be punished. It is to Mr. Gladstone evident that a noble and commanding genius is perceptible all through the Iliad and the Odyssey, co-ordinating material and controlling systems. Instead of a motley group of gods, such as other ancient religions exhibit, we find in the Homeric poems an elaborate and magnificent structure. And the author then points out, with significance and truth, that where the Olympian system dealt with public affairs and the government of states, Christianity now deals with private character and the government of individuals.

It is, of course, impossible, in a few pages, to adequately analyze such works as these. They embody so much of learning, and constitute such an elaborate study of a great subject, as to make even the attempt out of the question. And Mr. Gladstone's treatment of the Homeric poems and controversy has been as copious as the subject itself is vast. Nothing, in fact, could better indicate the wonderful versatility of his mind, and the power of study and application which he has so steadily utilized amid the most intense distractions and varied labours. One final extract may be given here from his first and chief contribution to the subject. It embodies in a few words his love for Homer; that admiration for ancient Greece which has not been without its effect upon the national welfare of modern Greece; and his appreciation of the general results which have flowed from those famous writings:

> "Even when the sun of her glory had set, there was yet left behind an immortal spark of the ancient vitality which, enduring through all vicissitudes, kindled into a blaze after two thousand years; and we of this day have seen a Greek nation, founded anew by its own energies, become a centre of desire and hope, at least, to Eastern Christendom. The English are not ashamed to own their political forefathers in the forests of the northward European continent; and the later statesmen, with the lawgivers of Greece, were in their day glad, and with reason glad, to trace the bold outline and solid rudiments of their own and their country's greatness in the poems of Homer. Nothing in these poems offers itself—to me, at least—as more remarkable than the deep carving of the political characters, and, what is still more, the intense political spirit which pervades them. I will venture one step further, and say that, of all the countries of the civilized world, there is no one of which the inhabitants ought to find that spirit so intelligible and accessible as the English, because it is a spirit which still lives and breathes in our own institutions. There we find the great cardinal ideas which lie at the very foundation of all enlightened government; and there we find, too, the men formed under the influence of such ideas—
>
> 'The sombre aspect of majestic care,
> Of solitary thought, unshared resolve.'"

It is not, therefore, surprising that shortly after this work was published, the Greeks in the Ionian Islands should have looked upon Mr. Gladstone as a coming national deliverer, or that Sir George Cornewall Lewis should have wondered, with some degree of mingled wit and sarcasm, whether the statesman and author was going out there to be a Lycurgus or a Solon.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE IONIAN ISLANDS AND THE AMERICAN CONFLICT.

THE sending of Mr. Gladstone, as Lord High Commissioner-Extraordinary, to the Ionian Islands, was one of those events in political history which may fairly be termed picturesque. Since 1815 the Islands had been under British protection, and everything possible had been done to make the population contented and happy. Roads had been built, and various material improvements effected. They had been proclaimed a Republic, and given a Senate of six members and an Assembly of forty members. But the restless, excitable Greek nature remained unchanged, and with all its curious modern mixture of good and bad, of patriotism in thought and weakness in action, kept the population in a condition of chronic turmoil and dissatisfaction.

Self-government in any form was felt to be a sham, while a high British official supervised their external policy, and British red-coats garrisoned their forts. Not that they cared much about governing themselves. What they wanted was the power to realize a vague, but very general, aspiration in the direction of union with Greece. The restless Hellenic spirit actuated them as it had already, and successfully, moulded the destinies of the people on the historic mainland of Greece. They cared little for the material consequences, and would have probably preferred union with the rest of the race to all the comforts and benefits of British rule—even had they been enabled to foresee the somewhat unsatisfactory Greek future of debt, difficulty, and national weakness. The result of all this was an agitation which became sufficiently marked to attract attention in England, and led to the despatch of Mr. Gladstone upon his special mission.

There was, perhaps, a double purpose in this appointment. Lord Derby and Mr. Gladstone had always been upon the best of terms personally, and at this time the latter was giving the Conservative Government an independent support. But it was a doubtful kind of assistance, and one which could not be depended upon by the Government with any degree of certainty. It was, therefore, probably felt by Lord Derby that the offer and acceptance of a position of this sort might serve to bind Mr. Gladstone personally to the party, while in the point of policy it would naturally combine their interests. Then there was the additional fact of the appointment being, in a certain sense, appropriate. No one understood ancient Greek thought and loved Grecian literature more than Mr. Gladstone; and in this the Earl of Derby had a fellow-feeling. So that it might well be supposed that his mission would be popular and his personality liked by the people to whom he was to be commissioned.

That the whole arrangement turned out differently from what Lord Derby had hoped was not, of course, his fault, though, in looking back, it is difficult to see how he could have so allowed his wishes to overcome what seems now to be a common-sense view of the situation. The appointment naturally created much discussion at home. Many Tories who felt and feared Mr. Gladstone's drift towards the other party were annoyed and angry; the Whigs were amused and critical; the Radicals were pleased; and every one was more or less surprised. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, who at this time occupied the Colonial Office, wrote a despatch to the Islands' administration which aroused a good deal of comment. In it he specially referred to the new Commissioner's Homeric scholarship.

This was declared in some quarters to be unseemly and irregular, and the lamentable result of having literary men in office. It was pointed out as a proof of weakness, and indication of possible danger, that a novelist was now leader of the House of Commons; that another writer of novels was Colonial Secretary; and that they had actually sent out a man to deal with Greek demagogues, in the Ionian Islands, simply because he had a liking for Homer. So far as Sir E. B. Lytton is concerned, Mr. Gladstone has put on record expressions of the warmest appreciation concerning his conduct of Colonial affairs at this time. He declared in a speech in the House, in 1861, that "the mission had the effect of placing me in close relation with Sir E. B. Lytton, whose brilliancy of genius was, in my opinion, less conspicuous than the thorough high-mindedness of his conduct upon every occasion." It is interesting to note, in passing, with what determination and certainty Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had risen in every branch of activity and effort into which he entered. He had already won the highest fame as a novelist. He had attained distinction as an orator, in spite of difficulties in voice and hearing which appeared to render success impossible. He had won high position as a dramatist, although his first effort was an absolute failure. And now, like Macaulay and Disraeli, he was winning his spurs in politics.

Mr. Gladstone's conception of his mission appears in the following extract from the speech already mentioned: "It was not my opinion, viewing the state of the institutions and government of the Ionian Islands antecedently to that period, that the position of this country was altogether clear and satisfactory, and I was sanguine in the hope and expectation that it would be practicable to thoroughly set right the character of England by offering to the people of these islands institutions founded upon those principles and armed with those guarantees of freedom which are so inexpressibly dear to ourselves. That was the object for which I undertook that mission."

Mr. Gladstone went to the Ionian Islands with the purpose of reforming and improving their system of government. He found the people striving for an opportunity to change their allegiance. His conscience, therefore, forced him to act in harmony with his surroundings, and in direct opposition to what Lord Derby had expected, and what he had himself intended to do. The High Commissioner arrived at Corfu in November, 1858, and immediately called together the Houses and explained to them the purpose of his mission. He declared that he had not come to discuss the propriety, or otherwise, of maintaining the British protectorate, but rather to see what could be done to further extend the liberties and rights of the people under and through British protection.

But it was useless making any explanation. He might as well have followed the example of Canute the Dane, and tried to influence the tides of the ocean as to change the current of Ionian thought. The people were convinced, or pretended to be convinced, that Mr. Gladstone had come to help in fulfilling their national aspirations. Instead of being received as the Commissioner of a British Conservative Government, he was everywhere welcomed as a liberator, a lover of Greece, a supporter of the popular cause. He was declared to be the precursor of independence and union with the Hellenic race, and his path was therefore made like a triumphal progress.

He found it impossible to correct the misapprehension, or make the people understand that he wanted to reconcile the Islands to the protectorate, not to relieve them from it. Revolution, and not reconciliation, was what they wanted. Finally, the National Assembly passed a formal resolution, declaring for union with Greece; and all the modification which the High Commissioner could obtain was the appointment of a committee to put the motion into the form of a memorial to the protecting power. A petition was duly prepared, therefore, and despatched to the Queen, alleging that "the single and unanimous will of the Ionian people has been, and is, for their union with the Kingdom of Greece."

Naturally, the enthusiastic reception accorded to Mr. Gladstone, and news of the popular belief concerning his mission, had been already discussed in England. Opponents criticized the position of affairs with some violence, and even declared that he had gone out with the deliberate determination of stirring up the people of the Islands to demand the abrogation of British protection and influence. And it was not altogether surprising that Conservative opinion at home found some difficulty in understanding the situation. The Islanders practically wished to exchange a moderate freedom of government, and one capable of much further extension at the willing hands of a great power—which was able to maintain those liberties as well as to promote them—for amalgamation with countrymen who were living under an imperfect constitution, and a weak and somewhat impecunious government.

To the Tories in England the news came like a shock. It was a reversal of all that Lord Derby had hoped, and served to embarrass the administration and place it in a peculiarly awkward position. When the despatches themselves came from the High Commissioner the party must have felt somewhat as it did afterwards in the early Seventies, when Sir Stafford Northcote's presence upon the High Joint Commission at Washington so signally embarrassed the leaders and members of the Opposition at home. Mr. Gladstone himself anticipated criticism, and in writing to Mr. Hayward—February 8th, 1859—declared that in England he feared his proposals to the Ionian assembly would be thought extravagant. "They will probably be rejected here," he added, "for being contemptibly inefficient."

Shortly afterwards he returned to England and was replaced by Sir Henry Storks, with instructions to do all that was possible to allay the expectation of the people in the Islands, as well as the alarm which was felt at home. Opinion concerning Mr. Gladstone's mission was extremely varied. His successor wrote to a friend that "Gladstone is regretted by many and respected by all. Nothing could have been better than the judgment, temper, firmness, and talent he has shown." Monckton Milnes, who was surely friendly enough in person, declared that "the Ionian matter has been singularly mismanaged, and Gladstone made very ridiculous." Robert Lowe, writing in his own inimitably sarcastic way to Bernal Osborne, observed that Mr. Gladstone had gone out by advice "to prove that he was not unwilling to take a part in public affairs, which after his twenty-nine speeches in one day on the Divorce Bill nobody had any reason to doubt. Of course, he was to advise the cession of the Islands to our Cabinet, which seems to want as much advising as the Crown of which it is the adviser."

However that may be, the cession eventually took place, and in June, 1864, the Ionian Islands were philanthropically and generously handed over to Greece. There was a good deal of nonsense talked during the intermediate years. One would suppose from the arguments used about nationality and sentiment and inclination that no territory should be held by any great power, and especially England, if the majority expressed the slightest desire for union with some other country. No matter what the benefits conferred by British rule might be; no matter how great the liberty enjoyed or how strong and efficient the protection given; no matter how free and progressive the government and institutions might be; no matter how long the connection may have been maintained; it must be broken up and the existing institutions scattered to the winds, if some Pan-Hellenic enthusiasm or some temporary ebullition of national feeling should chance to be aroused.

In reality, the cession of the Ionian Islands was more important than appeared on the surface. It was the first practical manifestation of that Manchester school influence which, in the years immediately following, rose to its greatest height. The same principle, logically carried out, would have given Quebec to France, the rest of Canada to the United States, and South Africa to the Dutch, had a local desire in any of these directions shown itself. Fortunately, Colonial loyalty made this impossible, and, in the long run, overpowered the influence at the heart of the Empire which threatened to make disintegration not only probable, as it seemed in those days, but absolutely inevitable.

It cannot be said that these considerations presented themselves to Mr. Gladstone. He favoured the cession, primarily, because the people seemed to want it; and secondly, though perhaps unconsciously, because he was saturated with Greek sentiment and was full of sympathy with Greek aspirations. Speaking at Manchester, on October 14th, 1864, he declared that in this Act "a marked homage was paid to the principles of justice; and we, who went about preaching to others that they ought to have regard to national rights, feelings, and traditions, showed, by the cession of the protectorate of the Ionian Islands, that we were ready to apply in our own case the rules and maxims which we advised them to apply."

Meantime the American civil war had commenced, and the great republic was rent in twain over the right of secession and the privilege of slavery. At first there was no very pronounced feeling in England, one way or the other. It was thought probable that the Southern States would be eventually allowed to secede, and it was hoped, vaguely, that something would happen to prevent a serious interference with the supply of cotton. Great questions of principle did not seem to be very clearly involved. If the American Colonies had the right to try to win their independence from the mother country, which, aside from all matters of sentiment, had done so much for them in battle against the French and the Indians, surely some of those one-time colonies had the right now to sever their connection with the sister states. And, until the war had been waged for some time, no question of the perpetuation of slavery was allowed to enter into the negotiations, or to appear as the official object of the struggle. So for a period the sentiment in England was quiescent, though doubtful.

But gradually the conflict deepened. The gallantry and chivalry of the Southerners appealed strongly to the average Englishman, who, with the instinctive feeling of a brave man, is generally on the side of the weakest. It was so very unequal a struggle, and the South rallied to it with such success, that sympathy soon grew for a people who were apparently fighting desperately for home and fireside and all that makes life dear. Slavery was forgotten, and indeed for a prolonged period the North made it manifest that the war was being carried on to save the Union, and not to establish liberty for the slave. In other words, and as many an English politician put it, the war was for conquest and aggrandizement, rather than for any great principle of liberty. As a matter of fact, also, it must be admitted that the differences in feeling, in national characteristics, in methods of life, in customs and ideas, were far greater between the North and the South than they were, in 1776, between England and the Thirteen Colonies.

Finally, England had no particular reason to love the Americans as a people. They had joined her bitterest enemies in 1812, and during the greatest struggle of her whole national existence had striven to detach the North American possessions from her Empire. They had fought a long war upon a pretext which had really been withdrawn before the declaration was made. And since then aggressive, and sometimes very unfair, American diplomacy had been the leading feature of their international intercourse. Hence the disruption or threatened disintegration of the American Republic was not likely to be a source of sincere grief to English leaders. And they do not seem to have been sufficiently clear-sighted to see what the result would probably be. They did not then understand the United States, or realize how great its resources were. But they did feel that the American Union had been always hostile to England, that it was a permanent menace to Canada as a part of the Empire, and that it might be as well that the South should win. Hence the fact that from England and France alone came no general assurance of sympathy or of friendship for the Union. The Emperor of the French was, in fact, just then bent upon the establishment of a Mexican Empire, and was naturally not particularly anxious for the permanence and development of American unity.

This antagonistic feeling in England became alomst universal amongst the cultured and upper classes. Disraeli and Bright were about the only political leaders who publicly stood by the North. In a letter written during January, 1862, Cobden, Radical as he was, declared that he couldn't see his way through the American business. "I don't believe the North and South can ever be in the same bed again. Nor do I see how the military operations can be carried into the South so as to inflict a crushing defeat. . . . Three-fourths of the House (of Commons) would be glad to find an excuse for voting for the dismemberment of the great republic." This object might, of course, have been served by a recognition of the South as an independent power, but the British Cabinet maintained its neutrality; and, though it might not offer sympathy, at least refused to join France in a recognition which Napoleon was only too anxious to give on his own account.

For this the Americans owe England a debt of gratitude, which was paid later on in the Alabama claims and innumerable threats of war. Sir Archibald Alison, the distinguished historian, in his autobiography, records an interesting fact in this connection. He states that Sir Hugh Cairns—afterwards Earl Cairns and Lord Chancellor—"told me a curious thing connected with the American war, which was that, contrary to what was supposed by the general public, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell were supporters of the Federals in the Cabinet, and Mr. Gladstone was understood to be the friend of the Confederates." And Mrs. Norton, the authoress, who in her day knew every one and was intimate with many of the leaders, confirmed this: "She gave me the same account as Cairns had done of the strange transposition of parties in the Cabinet, adding the remarkable words, 'Gladstone is Confederate to the backbone.'"

A little later, Cobden, in writing to M. Chevalier, the eminent economist, observed that he was "by no means so sure as Gladstone that the South will ever be a nation," and on July 11th, 1862, stated in a letter to Charles Sumner, that "I know Gladstone would restore your Union to-morrow if he could; yet he has steadily maintained from the first that, unless there was a strong Union sentiment, it is impossible that the South can be subdued. Now the belief is all but universal that there is no Union feeling in the South." But a little later all question as to Mr. Gladstone's opinions upon the subject was settled. In the autumn of 1862, Mr. Mason, on behalf of the Confederate States, wrote to the British Foreign Secretary, pleading for recognition as a separate and independent power. Earl Russell promptly replied that, in order to be entitled to a place amongst the independent nations of the earth, a State ought not only to have strength and resources for a time, but afford promise of stability and permanence. "Should the Confederate States of America win that place among nations, it might be right for other nations justly to acknowledge an independence achieved by victory, and maintained by a successful resistance to all attempts to overthrow it."

Lord Russell then went on to say that such a time "has not, in the judgment of Her Majesty's Government, arrived." A few weeks after this deliberate statement, Mr. Gladstone made a speech at Newcastle—October 8th, 1862—which created a considerable sensation, and seemed to indicate that the time was really near at hand when recognition would be given. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke plainly and to the point:

> "Jefferson Davis and the Southern leaders have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and have made what is more than either—they have made a nation."

Meanwhile the great struggle went on. The Trent affair brought England to the verge of war, and had the United States—as it was still called—not given way, there would have been no other alternative. But ten thousand troops had been landed in Canada, and the Colonies seemed enthusiastically ready for war, while the majority of the English people were at the moment in a similar humour. It was, therefore, wise and necessary for the North to give in, especially as its Government was clearly wrong in the taking of Mason and Slidell from a British ship. But this backdown did not enhance good feeling in the republic, while the escape of the "Alabama" from an English port, and its tremendous depredations upon Northern commerce, added greatly to the steadily growing hostility. Through it all, however, two things should be remembered. The British Government resisted all entreaties from France, from the South, and from within its party ranks, to recognize the independence of the Confederate States; while the cotton operatives of Lancashire gave an illustration of friendly heroism which has rarely been equalled.

These people depended upon the manufacture of cotton for their daily bread. The sudden stoppage of the supply from the South through the Northern blockade meant starvation, and for a long time they suffered untold hardships. Cobden wrote, shortly after Mr. Gladstone's famous speech, that "few people can realize the appalling state of things in this neighbourhood. Lancashire with its machinery stopped is like a strong man suddenly struck with paralysis." Yet, although their influence was considerable, and might have proved sufficient to turn the scale in favour of a recognition of Southern independence—thus removing the blockade and giving them cotton once more—the operatives of that great county sympathized with the North, and consequently refused to agitate in support of such a policy.

A little while after his Newcastle speech Mr. Gladstone was interrogated in the House, and declared that his words were simply the expression of an opinion he had long held and often stated, that any effort of the Northern States to subjugate the South was impossible if the latter resisted. And he is said to have given practical expression to this sympathy with the Southern people. In Thomas Hughes' "Life" of the well-known Bishop Fraser of Manchester is an extract from a letter written by that prelate on September 20th, 1865. In it he observes:

> "As it is, the hostile feeling of Americans generally towards England seems to me as intense as ever; indeed, just now, for some reason or other, the newspapers in a body seem to be engaged in fanning the flame. They have just got hold of a list of about a dozen subscribers to the Confederate loan, among whom is W. E. Gladstone, down for £2,000. This, as you might expect, is a topic for excited editorials; and the cry is that the American Government ought to demand his dismissal from the English Ministry."[*]

But in this feeling for the South, Mr. Gladstone, as already stated, formed but one of quite a large majority. In a speech made during the same year as the above letter was penned, Mr. Bright referred to "the indiscriminate abuse heaped upon the United States by Mr. Roebuck, and the unsleeping ill-will of Lord Cranborne." The former was an erratic Radical, possessed of an abundant ability, which was frequently misdirected; and the after views of the latter are voiced in the dignified, friendly courtesy displayed towards the United States by himself during many recent years as Marquess of Salisbury and Foreign Secretary. Mr. Gladstone, however, soon modified his opinions. In 1863, he refused to support Mr. Roebuck's motion for a recognition of the Southern States, and in August, 1867, after the long struggle had been relegated to history, he frankly wrote to a correspondent in New York his regret at the opinions he had expressed. "I must confess," he observed, "that I was wrong. Yet the motive was not bad. My sympathies were then—where they had long before been, where they are now—with the whole American people. I, probably, like many Europeans, did not understand the nature and working of the American Union. I had imbibed, conscientiously, if erroneously, an opinion that twenty or twenty-four millions of the North would be happier and would be stronger (of course, assuming that they held together) without the South than with it."

And then he pointed out that many, including himself, had thought emancipation of the slaves more likely to come under an independent government than under the old system, by which the whole power of the Northern States was placed at the command of the Southern slaveholders. There was much of common sense in this latter claim, and it must be remembered that Mr. Gladstone modified his views as soon as President Lincoln had made the freedom of the slave a plank in the Northern platform. But the struggle was now over; the Union of the American States had been proclaimed by principle and the sword of conquest to be one and indivisible; the people of the North had won back the organized strength and power of their country, and proved that, in these modern days, as in centuries long gone by, the national life "is not as idle ore":

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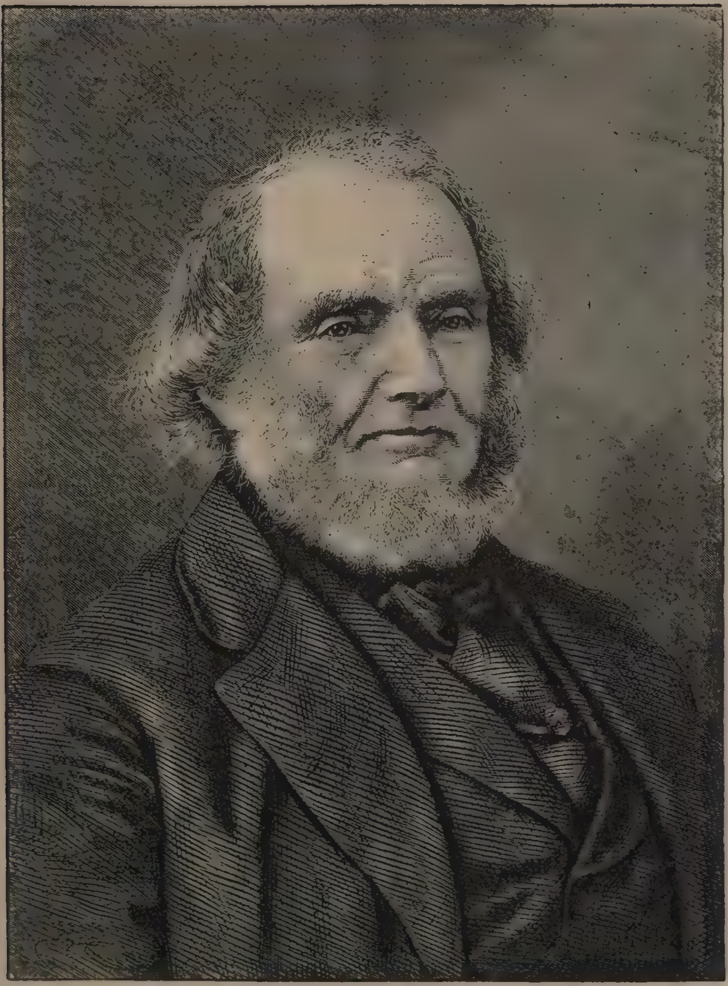
[*] The interest of this statement is not affected by Mr. Gladstone's subsequent denial of its accuracy.

> "But iron dug from central gloom,
> And heated hot with burning fears,
> And dip't in baths of hissing tears,
> And battered with the shocks of doom
> To shape and use."

As time passed on, the people of the United States also found that they had no warmer or more sincere friend in Europe than Mr. Gladstone. His speeches upon a hundred platforms, and his arguments in more than a hundred articles, indicated this, while the Alabama award proved it.

In his eloquent paper, entitled "Kin Beyond Sea," published in 1878, Mr. Gladstone embodied this sentiment of affection in his reference to England's commercial supremacy and the coming competition of the United States. "It is she alone," declared the writer, "who can, and probably will, wrest from us that commercial primacy. We have no title, I have no inclination, to murmur at the prospect. If she acquires it, she will make the acquisition by the right of the strongest; but in this instance the strongest means the best." Such language proves the great friendship and regard which he felt for the republic, and breathes a noble cosmopolitan—if somewhat fatalistic—spirit. But it is not a national English feeling. It does not indicate that absorbing, and perhaps selfish, love for one's own country which passes as patriotism, and is so common in America, but rather reveals a broad humanitarian sentiment which includes all the world in an equality of sympathy and consideration.

Hence, it may be said, the intensity of the opposition which Mr. Gladstone has more than once aroused at home in connection with portions of his foreign policy, and amongst those especially who feel deeply and sincerely the proud English and Imperial belief that, "come the four quarters of the world in arms," nothing can seriously menace the United Kingdom, if its people are but true to themselves and their own expansion and development. But the consciousness of this wide international sympathy in the man himself is what has caused the Americans to so soon forget the statesman's attitude at the time of their civil war, and has made them during the years which followed come to regard him with such great and genuine popular esteem. Henry Ward Beecher, indeed, once told the Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker that "not Queen Victoria herself would excite so much interest in America as Mr. Gladstone, were he to come over"; and another distinguished American has asserted that he would hardly, under such circumstances, be allowed to land, because of "the solid block of men that would stretch right back from New York to Chicago." And underlying this outburst of enthusiasm there is a very substantial basis of popular fact.



LORD JOHN RUSSELL, 1ST EARL RUSSELL,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1847-52, 1865-66.

RICHARD COBDEN, M.P.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. GLADSTONE'S GREAT BUDGETS.

THERE were a great many troubles upon the horizon when Lord Palmerston's Ministry came into power in 1859. Louis Napoleon appeared to be an object of general and profound distrust. His alliance was looked upon with doubt, his friendship in some quarters was regarded with fear, his ambition was admitted to be an all-important factor in foreign affairs. The mutterings of civil war were discernible in America; another war with China had become inevitable; Italy was convulsed from end to end with its struggle for liberty and union; and England itself was stirred with labour disputes and some of the greatest strikes in its history. In the British Cabinet also there soon came dissensions, caused by the Premier's determination to strengthen the national defences, and Mr. Gladstone's aversion to what he deemed unnecessary expenditure.

On the other hand, the period in English financial and commercial history which opened with the completion of the French Treaty and the presentation of the famous Budget of 1860 furnished a most advantageous moment for the execution of Mr. Gladstone's new policy. It was a period of steadily increasing trade and of very general prosperity. The remission of so many duties upon imports, at a time prior to the imposition of serious or heavy protective measures in foreign countries, had given a tremendous impetus to British commerce and production by promoting the import of raw material, cheapening the manufactured product, and thus enabling the manufacturer to capture external markets, and for a decade or so to practically command the trade of the world. Added to these influences were the sudden development of steam communication and the marvellous improvements in machinery.

It was, therefore, a great opportunity for a financier, and that Mr. Gladstone was able not only to rise to the occasion, but to rise above it, constitutes one of his most prominent claims to personal greatness. His Budget was also to mark the apotheosis of free trade. Through it the French Treaty became an international fact and compact. The Emperor of the French arranged for the abolition of all prohibitory duties upon British goods, and the reducing of the tariff upon many raw materials, whilst England agreed to do away with all remaining duties on French manufactures and to reduce the taxes on French wines It was, indeed, a triumph for the freer trade principle, and seemed to enthusiastic economists of that school—such as Cobden, Bright, and Gladstone—to indicate a coming universal victory. At the same time, it calmed, to some extent, the alarm which had been rising as to the intentions of Napoleon III., although it failed to change Lord Palmerston's views regarding defence in the slightest degree.

The French Treaty was the result of Mr. Cobden's indefatigable efforts. At first he had acted in a private capacity, and on his own responsibility as a prominent promoter, if not the father, of English free trade. Then, as success became possible, he had been duly commissioned by the British Government, and finally concluded his negotiations under the auspices, and with the enthusiastic support, of Mr. Gladstone as Finance Minister. This was one feature which gave interest and importance to the coming Budget. Another was the proposed abolition of the duty on paper. Still another was to be found in memories of the eloquence which had characterized Mr. Gladstone's first great financial effort in 1853, and which now lent additional fascination to the coming occasion.

And to clearly understand the triumph which followed, it must be remembered that the French Treaty was far from being popular with the people as a whole. Many leaders of public opinion voiced this feeling. The *Times* thundered against the arrangement with force and great influence; Lord Overstone, a prominent financier and banker, pronounced vigorously against it; and, according to Greville, even as important a Whig as Lord Clarendon was opposed to it. The distrust felt concerning Napoleon III. was too intense for immediate alleviation. It was claimed that he had allied himself with England during the Crimean war in order to crush Russia, and avenge the disasters of the great Napoleon at Moscow. In a brief campaign, he had recently put Austria under his feet. Was Prussia or England to be the next object of his ambition and historic revenge? It was natural that people should talk this way, and that the handing over of Nice and Savoy by Sardinia should have started fresh denunciations of French aggrandizement and aspirations.

Naturally, therefore, these events tended to complicate the reception of a treaty which was to try to keep France in the position of an ally, and inaugurate the dream of a period marked by universal peace and friendly trade. And just at this critical moment the man upon whom so much depended fell ill. The presentation of the Budget was consequently postponed from the 6th of February to the 10th, and Mr. Gladstone's physician declared that he should have taken two months' rest instead of a few days. All these circumstances, of course, combined to make the occasion intensely, almost dramatically, interesting. Greville wrote in his diary shortly afterwards that when he left London, a week before the Budget speech, "the world was anxiously expecting it," and he adds that Mr. Gladstone's own confidence and that of most of his colleagues in its success was unbounded.

On the day announced the Chancellor of the Exchequer arrived at the House—which was packed to the doors, and through all its approaches—and walked up the chamber with surprising alacrity and evident pleasure at the hearty cheers which reached him. He certainly did not look like a sick man, either mentally or physically. The House at once went into Committee, and Mr. Gladstone plunged into a speech lasting four hours, and which presented a great scheme, charmed all hearers, and pleased the country at large. He first dwelt upon the importance of the occasion, one which "public expectation had long marked out as an important epoch in British finance." He pointed out that the expectations announced in his Budget speech of 1853 had been fulfilled with regard to the increase in revenue, but had been otherwise rendered nugatory through the failure of the succession duty, and partly through the war expenditure of the period. However, an arrangement had occurred which would diminish the annual payment of interest upon the national debt by over $10,000,000. At the same time a revenue of nearly $60,000,000 a year levied upon tea and sugar was about to lapse, while the income tax, from which some $50,000,000 more was obtained, would also expire by efflux of time. In addition to these important points, the new treaty of commerce with France would have to be considered.

After dealing with the general figures of current revenue and expenditure, the Chancellor announced his policy to involve the retention of the tea and sugar duties for one year; the reimposition of an income tax of 10d. in the pound for a similar period; the abolition of duties on French manufactures and the reduction of the tariff on French wines and brandies; "the sweeping from the statute book of such relics of protection as still remain upon it;" the abolition of customs duties on butter, tallow, cheese, oranges, lemons, eggs, etc.; the doing away with the excise and external duties upon paper, which "operated most oppressively on the common sorts of paper and tended to restrict the circulation of cheap literature." These alterations and reductions would give a total relief to the consumer of $20,000,000, and would leave the whole number of articles upon the customs tariff at forty-eight—to be four less in the succeeding year. There would also be a surplus of between two and three million dollars.

The speech contained very many happy allusions and sentences. Especially pleasant was his tribute to Mr. Cobden, who had persistently refused both ministerial place and royal honours. "Rare is the privilege of any man who, having fourteen years ago rendered to his country one signal and splendid service, now again within the same brief span of life, decorated neither by rank nor title, bearing no mark to distinguish him from the people whom he loves, has been permitted again to perform a great and memorable service to his sovereign and to his country." The speaker denounced protection with great vigour and emphasis, referring to it as having formerly dwelt in the palaces and high places of the land. It had since been driven to "a pretty comfortable shelter and good living in holes and corners," and from this last refuge he asked the House to drive it. And, in point of fact, his Budget did mark the death of English legislative protection and the full triumph of English free trade.

In defending the income tax which he found it necessary to re-establish, despite his prophecy in 1853 that by 1860 such necessity would have disappeared, Mr. Gladstone found abundant excuse in the Crimean war. Referring to the unpopularity of the tax in certain quarters, he told the House of a letter lately received, in which the writer, after describing its "monstrous injustice and iniquity," suggested that "in consideration thereof the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be publicly hanged." He warmly eulogized the French Treaty, and defended it from the charge of being an infraction of the rigid free-trade theory. He declared himself unaware of any entangling engagement in its terms, or of any grant of exclusive privileges under its operation. His speech concluded with one of those brilliant perorations for which his name was becoming famous:

> "Our proposals involve a great reform in our tariff; they involve a large remission of taxation; and last of all, though not least, they include that commercial treaty with France which, though we have to apprehend that objections in some quarters will be taken to it, we confidently recommend not only on moral, political, and social, but also, and with equal confidence, on economical and fiscal grounds. . . . There were times, now long gone by, when sovereigns made progress through the land, and when, at the proclamation of their heralds, they caused to be scattered whole showers of coin among the people who thronged upon their steps. That may have been a goodly spectacle, but it is also a goodly spectacle, and one adapted to the altered spirit and circumstances of our times, when our sovereign is enabled, through the wisdom of her great council assembled in Parliament around her, again to scatter blessings among her subjects by means of wise and prudent laws—of laws which do not sap in any respect the foundations of duty or of manhood, but which strike away the shackles from the arms of industry, which give new incentives and new rewards to toil, and which win more and more for the Throne, and for the institutions of the country, the gratitude, the confidence, and the love of an united people."

And then, before a final appeal to Parliament for its support and approval, the speaker addressed those who were anxious upon the question of national defences, and declared that "that which stirs the flame of patriotism in men, that which binds them in one heart and soul, that which gives them increased confidence in their rulers, that which makes them feel and know that they are treated with justice, and that we who are representing them are labouring incessantly and earnestly for their good, is in itself no small, no feeble, no transitory part of national defence."

It was a great speech. It was both an oration and a magnificent State paper combined. The crowding ideas, the beautiful imagery, the accurate sentences, the perfect wording and balancing of parts, the musical and carefully modulated voice, the whole appearance of the man, combined to make the effort a remarkable one—apart from the importance of the occasion and the greatness of the theme. Mr. Greville wrote, with characteristic enthusiasm, and a phraseology, it may be said, which nearly always represented with accuracy the environment of the moment: "At the end of his two days' delay, he achieved one of the greatest triumphs the House of Commons ever witnessed. Everybody I have heard from admits that it was a magnificent display, not to be surpassed in ability of execution, and that he carried the House of Commons completely with him. I can well believe it, for when I read the report of it next day it carried me along with it likewise."

But there were still obstacles to encounter. No scheme has ever yet been proposed which gave universal satisfaction, and there were some proposals made by Mr. Gladstone upon this occasion which naturally aroused strong opposition. The shipowners did not like the French Treaty because of certain discriminations against English shipping; the licensed victuallers did not approve of licenses for eating houses; the protectionists, who were brave enough to show their colours, denounced the whole scheme of taxation. Especially was this the case with the paper duties. The Government policy included the abolition of the excise or home tax, and the admission free of foreign paper, with which English manufacturers claimed they could not compete. And, of course, the income tax created hostility in rather influential quarters. The Opposition in the House made one desperate onslaught, which Mr. Disraeli voiced by an attack, in his usual clever and sarcastic style, upon the treaty, the Government, and Mr. Cobden in particular.

But the proposals were too carefully arranged, and the Budget speech too powerfully delivered, to permit of a successful raid, although there might for the moment be a spirited one. Mr. Gladstone replied, and, in Homeric language, "poured in thunder on his foe." The result was a Government majority of 63. A little later, and a still worse fate met a motion affirming the inexpediency of any remission of duties, and the disappointment which would be felt at the reimposition of the income tax. Mr. Gladstone again replied at length, after a three days' debate, and was given a majority which settled the matter so far as the Commons was concerned. To quote Greville again: "On Friday night, Gladstone had another great triumph. He made a splendid speech and obtained a majority of 116, which puts an end to the contest. He is now the great man of the day."

But there was to be bitter mingled with the sweet. The House of Lords intervened with a veto on the Paper Bill, and thus inaugurated a constitutional contest, which ended—like so many others before and since—in a compromise. It turned upon the simple point that the House of Commons, in the exercise of its undoubted (and, as it claimed, sole) privilege, had remitted a tax; the House of Lords proposed to continue it. Eventually, after fiery speeches in the country by Mr. Bright, dissensions in the Cabinet, which very nearly forced

Gladstone to resign, and a steady diminution of the Government's majority upon the matter in the House, the question was settled for the time by the bill being dropped, and a series of resolutions carried upon the motion of Lord Palmerston. These asserted the exclusive right of the Commons to deal with the grant of supplies to the Crown, and its entire and exclusive control over all questions of taxation. Incidentally, the dispute proved a severe strain upon the relations between the Premier and his Chancellor of the Exchequer, and shows them to have been in a condition of veiled, and sometimes active, antagonism.

All this marred somewhat the greatness of the success which Mr. Gladstone had won, and ruffled his ardent temper not a little. And the jocular remark made by Lord Palmerston, to the effect that disappointment at the loss of his Paper proposals could not possibly equal his—the Premier's—feelings at the loss of the Derby, which he had just encountered, did not in all probability suffice to sooth the Chancellor to any extent. In a speech, which Lord Russell called "magnificently mad," he came as near denouncing Palmerston as was possible while remaining in the Government; declared that the action of the Lords—which the Premier had aided rather than hindered—was a gigantic innovation; and concluded by reserving to himself the right to take future action upon the resolutions passed by the House of Commons.

In the succeeding Budget of 1861, Mr. Gladstone got even with the Lords in a most adroit and skilful manner. His speech was again looked forward to with intense interest, and once again the House and the galleries were packed with eager listeners. After giving the general figures for the year, he referred to the very considerable increase in expenditure, from $360,000,000, in 1854, to $455,000,000 in 1860, and to the fact that the importation of corn had risen by over one hundred millions sterling in a short period. A large variety of subjects were then discussed with an eloquence that lent a charm to the driest detail, and the important announcements were made that a penny in the income tax would be taken off and the paper duties abolished. The method suggested for carrying the latter proposal through the other House was very ingenious and at the same time simple. The various portions of the Budget, instead of being sent up one by one, were to be all included in a single bill, so that a rejection of part meant the rejection of the whole, and an immense amount of consequent public inconvenience, if not administrative deadlock, for want of supplies.

In view of his differences with Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone's remarks about the increase of expenditure and national burdens through arrangements for defence, were significant. He urged that the time had come for a check being put upon this movement, and declared that "if there be any danger which has recently, in an especial manner, beset us, it has seemed to me to be during recent years chiefly, in our proneness to constant and apparently almost boundless augmentations of expenditure." His speech, as a whole, was another great success. Some one has said that the House vibrated, at times, to the sound of his voice, like an instrument of music to the touch of genius. The *Daily News* declared, on this occasion, that "the audacious shrewdness of Lancashire, married to the polished grace of Oxford, is a felicitous union of the strength and culture of Liberal and Conservative England, and no party in the House can sit under the spell of Mr. Gladstone's rounded and shining eloquence without a conviction that the man who can talk 'shop' like a tenth muse is, after all, a true representative man of the market of the world."

A writer in the *Illustrated London News* described this as "the very best speech Mr. Gladstone ever made," and thought that its most conspicuous feature was the remarkable dexterity with which the orator appealed, alternately, to the tastes, feelings, and opinions of both sides of the House. The same article referred to the buoyancy of his demeanour, the raciness of his occasional humour, the curious and combined facility of expression in speech and face. "In every possible respect it was a masterpiece of oratory; and as it in the result actually led to something tangible—that is to say, to a surplus and a reduction of taxation—it was, in every sense, triumphant."

The opposition to the Budget was, as usual, strong, while the criticisms of the speech were vehement, and partook of that personal nature which afterwards became so common where Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli were concerned. The action of the Government in bracketing all their financial measures together, and thus forcing the Lords to accept them, or else disorganize the whole system of English government, was at once a daring measure and a startling surprise. During the debates, one fierce attack upon Mr. Gladstone was made by Lord Robert Cecil (Lord Salisbury). After declaring that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was an unreliable financier, he went on to say that, "upon a former occasion, he had described the policy of the Government as one only worthy of a country attorney; but he was now bound to say that he had done injustice to the attorneys." Amid loud cries of dissent, he spoke of their policy, at this time, as involving legal chicane. In fact, the proposed method of getting the Budget items through the Lords was nothing but a "dodge," and Americanized finance was to be the final result of Americanized institutions. He declared that, so long as Mr. Gladstone held the Exchequer, there would be neither regularity in the House of Commons, nor confidence in the country.

Mr. Disraeli, in turn, claimed that the Ministers had created an artificial surplus in order that they might perpetrate a financial caprice. Finally, however, the Government obtained a majority of fifteen, and Mr. Gladstone's fourth Budget—in number, though not in rotation—became a matter of history and legislation, while the duties were taken off paper, and the House of Lords and the

Conservatives completely out-manœuvred. Another important event of this session was the introduction and passage of a Church Rates Abolition Bill, which Mr. Gladstone strongly opposed. He thought the measure before the House was not calculated to settle a much-vexed question, and declared that "the people of England were not prepared to part with the union of Church and State, which was one of the avowed objects of the abolition of Church rates." In this case he considered the House of Lords abundantly justified in their continued rejection of the measure. The bill was supported by Lord Palmerston, and in the Upper House by Lord Russell, but was, of course, thrown out again by the Peers.

An eloquent and exciting debate upon Italy followed this incident. The Government were accused of sympathy with the revolutionists in that country, and of practical interference and aid. Mr. Gladstone took up again the gauntlet he had long since thrown down, and in stirring language defended the course of the Ministry; denounced "that miserable monarch," Francis II. of Naples, who was then on the verge of dethronement; pointed with intense indignation to the dominance of Austria in Venetia and elsewhere; and concluded with the declaration that "the miseries of Italy have been the danger of Europe. The consolidation of Italy—if it be the will of God to grant her that boon—will be, I believe, a blessing as great to Europe as it is to all the people of the peninsula. It will add to the general peace and welfare of the civilized world a new and solid guarantee."

During these years several leaders passed from the political arena and the world in which they had held a prominent and influential place. All of them had been early friends and associates of Mr. Gladstone, and all of them had shared to some extent in his political ups and downs. Sidney Herbert—created Lord Herbert of Lea—was one of the most popular and pleasant personalities of his day. Possessing an easy eloquence of speech, a large acquaintance with the inner life of politics and society, a genial and graceful manner, together with hosts of friends, Lord Herbert seemed destined to fill the very highest place in public estimation and national government. To him Mr. Gladstone has since applied the lines:

"A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,
Framed in the prodigality of nature,
The spacious earth cannot afford again."

So in different degree with Sir George Cornewall Lewis. Commanding the respect and esteem of Parliament, trusted on account of the noble impartiality of his character and his reliability in motive and deed, he was also admired for his ability and acquirements. As Chancellor of the Exchequer, he had made a good record, even after so brilliant a Minister as Mr. Gladstone himself. Lord Canning—the Charles Canning of Eton and Oxford days—was another whose future seemed bright and brilliant after his splendid conduct in the many emergencies of the Indian mutiny. But Canning came home only to die.

In Sir James Graham, a different type of man had disappeared from view. He was an able, but never a popular politician. He had filled many high posts and done good service, but was hardly the stamp of leader who would ever be Prime Minister, except by accident. But the turns of the political wheel had made him a Peelite, an ardent friend, and, ultimately, a follower of Gladstone. The latter, many years after this period, declared himself to have been much attached to Sir James Graham, and spoke of "his great administrative ability, his remarkable debating power, and his inexhaustible, indefatigable industry." Of Lord Aberdeen, who also died about this time, it can only be said that posterity is beginning to do justice to admirable qualities which have been partially obscured by the clouds of the Crimean campaign, and partly also by a personal antipathy to the modern necessity of obtaining and retaining popularity. Mr. Gladstone's admiration for his character was intense, and a letter written by him. and published in the Queen's Prime Ministers' Series, constitutes a most touching and eloquent tribute.

During the October days of 1861, Bishop Wordsworth of Oxford—himself a life-long friend—wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a letter, which brought forth the following reply:

> "I heartily thank you for your sympathizing words and your estimate of the loss of Sir James Graham. The world, which is not usually unkind, mistook him; and perhaps it was no wonder. But I much feel his removal, quite apart from the immense value which I attached to his administrative knowledge and authority. The last twelve months have taken away my three closest political associates (Lord Aberdeen, Lord Herbert, Sir James Graham), and I am bare indeed; and yet, apart from the personal sense of loss, those events are not wholly unwelcome, which remind me that my own public life is now in its thirtieth year, and ought not to last very many years longer."

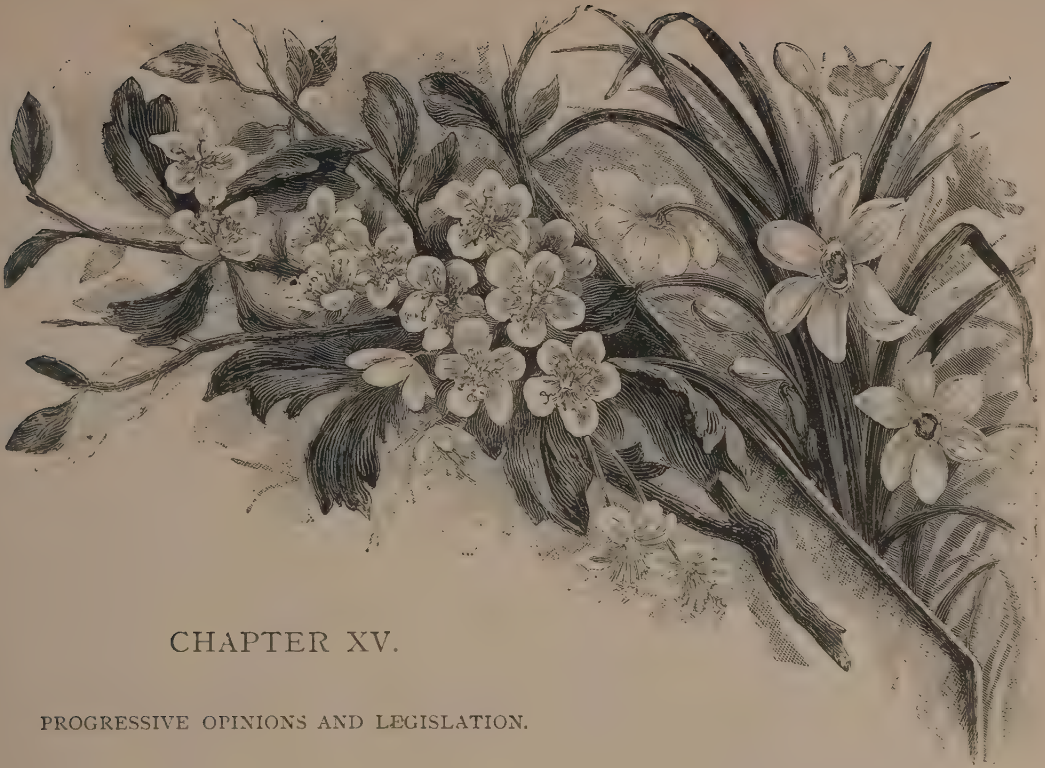
This last remark, on the verge of more than thirty years of further political effort and action, is interesting, though not pre-eminently prophetic.

Mr. Gladstone's Budget speech in 1862 was of importance, but not especially rhetorical in style. It was essentially a financial statement, and did not prove to be an oration as well. He had to deal with a diminished American trade and growing difficulties in the import of cotton, and was compelled to admit that the hoped-for remission of taxes could not yet take place. After the presentation of multitudinous details and figures, it was found that for the present no new taxes would be imposed, and a surplus would be dispensed with. The increase in trade with France was declared to be very gratifying, and so also with many other countries and colonies. The war expenditure of the last three years in China, New Zealand, and the Canadian provinces had, however, amounted to over $40,000,000, and it was this, in addition to the costly national defences at home, which he claimed to be the cause of a financial condition not altogether satisfactory, and the reason for the continued maintenance of a high income tax.

Mr. Disraeli responded in a keen criticism, and what he termed an "historical survey" of recent financial years. He claimed that during the preceding two years there had really been a deficit of $20,000,000; declared the position to be critical, and the excuses offered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer utterly fallacious. Mr. Gladstone answered his opponent in details which would be wearisome, and in language which clearly showed that the personal relations between the two were not very cordial. He was satisfied, he declared, to bear any epithets of vituperation which Mr. Disraeli had already produced or might produce on a future occasion. "It was not difficult to bear the abuse of the right honourable gentleman, when he remembered that far better men than himself had had to suffer it." Of course, the proposals eventually passed.

Another interesting Italian debate arose in the House during this session. Mr. Gladstone in his speech warmly supported the action of the Government in recognizing the new kingdom; praised Garibaldi for his overthrow of the Neapolitan monarch; expressed regret at the continued occupation of Rome by the French troops; condemned the impolicy and injustice of any prolongation of the temporal power of the Pope; and concluded with an expression of his belief that the most satisfactory chapter in the life of his noble friend—Lord Palmerston—was the fact that, through evil report and good report, he had sustained and supported the cause of Italy.

The session of 1863 was a remarkable financial period. The Budget was looked forward to with hope, and was received with satisfaction by the country as a whole. There had been a very substantial surplus, in spite of fears to the contrary, and this was used in the reduction of the income tax from 9d. and 7d. in the pound to 7d. and 6d., and in making arrangements as to the incomes subject to the tax, which would create a still greater reduction in effect. The duty on tea was also reduced to the extent of $6,000,000. Altogether, the remissions of taxation were in the neighbourhood of $24,000,000. Here, indeed, was room for eloquence, and the use of Mr. Gladstone's special gifts. He had a popular Budget and a pleasant task, and his speech was correspondingly effective and brilliant. To only one clause of his Budget was there any really substantial opposition. That one was the proposal to remove the exemption of charities from taxation. But so strong was the feeling expressed, and so large and influential the deputation which waited upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer in connection with it, that, despite his vigorous defence of the proposition, it had eventually to be withdrawn. With this exception, the Budget was received and accepted amid very general approval.



CHAPTER XV.

PROGRESSIVE OPINIONS AND LEGISLATION.

MR. GLADSTONE was now on the verge of another critical period in his career. His refusal to join Lord Derby in 1851 had marked his practical, though not nominal or complete, severance from the Tory party. His action in joining Lord Palmerston in 1859 had stamped him as a Whig, and marked him out for possible future leadership. The death of Palmerston in 1865 made him the leader of the party in the House of Commons, while his rejection by Oxford, in the same year, threw him into the arms of the advanced and advancing section of Liberalism.

But during this period it had not been all clear sailing, despite successful budgets and leaping trade returns. The differences between Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone had at times been more than acute, and the latter's forced subordination to a chief who held almost unique power during the last years of his life, must, upon several occasions, have proved very painful. Palmerston's personality and position was a most peculiar one. His popularity between 1860 and 1865 was immense. He seemed to have hardly any enemies, and, while five-sixths of the Liberals were devoted adherents, the balance were practically compelled to support him, or else place themselves in a useless and hopeless isolation. On the other hand, Mr. Disraeli was not yet in hearty and sympathetic touch with a party which could not do without his leadership, which was compelled to admit his genius and tremendous fighting resources, but was perhaps stirred more by fear and respect than by affection. The consequence was that Conservatives generally allowed their feeling of admiration and personal liking for Palmerston to take the form of a practical admission that the country was doing pretty well, and was, in any case, reasonably safe in his hands. They liked his aggressive foreign policy and his ideas concerning national defence. And, as he refused to move in any questions of reform, his power seemed to become stronger and more settled every day.

Formal opposition and severe criticism there were at times, especially when Gladstone and Disraeli came into collision, but care was taken that such action should not take the guise of obstruction or result in a serious defeat. Gradually, therefore, the curious phenomenon was seen of an English Premier governing with almost general consent, and forcing all leading questions of party conflict to be held in abeyance. Thus it came about that a man who had never affixed his name to any great act of successful statesmanship held for years a position in England more influential than that of Bolingbroke; wielded a power greater than that of Pitt or Chatham; and was as supreme in his rule as even Count Cavour could claim to be in an Italian Parliament which he had first created and then controlled. Naturally, too, such a condition of affairs had made Mr. Gladstone's position very difficult. He had never really liked Lord Palmerston, and now strongly disapproved of his large expenditures for defence purposes. Upon more than one occasion they came into direct conflict regarding the additional fortifications which the Premier considered absolutely essential in view of the attitude of France and the lurid look of the European storm-clouds. The Premier's opinion upon this issue was expressed, in 1859, in a rather surprising letter to the Queen:

> "Viscount Palmerston hopes to be able to overcome his objections; but if that should prove impossible, however great the loss to the Government by the retirement of Mr. Gladstone, it would be better to lose Mr. Gladstone than to run the risk of losing Portsmouth or Plymouth."

In another letter to Her Majesty he alleged that Mr. Gladstone's attitude was one of "ineffectual opposition and ultimate quiescence." Indeed, this state of affairs seems to have been public property, and the Budget speeches themselves indicate it pretty clearly. Lord Malmesbury, who, as a Tory Foreign Secretary upon several occasions, speaks with some authority, says in his Memoirs, on June 2nd, 1860, and after an interview with Lord and Lady Palmerston, that the former did not wish to lose Lord John Russell—who was inclined to side with the Chancellor of the Exchequer—but "would be very glad if Gladstone resigned." Lord Shaftesbury is even more plain, and asserts in his diary that "Palmerston had but two real enemies, Bright and Gladstone, . . . and they were the only two of whom he used strong language."

The diary of Bishop Wilberforce indicates the other side of the controversy. His friendship with Mr. Gladstone was so close, and their association so intimate, that his views may be fairly taken as those of his friend. They voice, in any case, the feeling of the few who did oppose and criticize Palmerston in these days of supremacy. Writing in 1863, the Bishop declares that "there is not a particle of veracity or noble feeling that I have ever been able to trace in him. He manages the House of Commons by debauching it, making all parties laugh at one another; the Tories at the Liberals, by his defeating all Liberal measures; the Liberals at the Tories, by the consciousness of getting everything that is to be got in Church and State." And it must be said that there was abundant reason for Mr. Gladstone to feel hurt and antagonistic. Apart from the fortifications' question, there was Lord Palmerston's curious action during the controversy with the Lords over the paper duties. Then he liked to make Church appointments which were exceedingly unpalatable to the High Church ideas of Mr. Gladstone, and which Bishop Wilberforce, upon one occasion, termed "wicked." And, besides these and other reasons, there were the diverse characteristics of the two men. One was gay, full of jokes; indifferent to home questions and domestic politics, with only a few really serious convictions; fond of diplomatic fireworks and the extension of England's military strength.

On the other hand was a statesman whose mind still appeared to be in a state of political transition, though the stage was now an advanced one. Mr. Gladstone was, of course, deeply interested in Church affairs, as he has always since remained. But, for the time being, he was also saturated with financial considerations; was inspired with the natural and proper aspiration for a steady reduction in the people's taxes; and was intensely ambitious, year in and year out, to produce a more and more favourable budget statement. Lord Palmerston, therefore, came in contact at every point of his general policy of home defence, or, as Mr. Gladstone once put it, "defiance," with his Chancellor of the Exchequer. And the latter was as serious in his life, as intense in his beliefs, as Palmerston was gay in appearance and trifling in manner.

Mr. Gladstone, as he appeared at this period, has been described by Sir Archibald Alison—who, in politics, was an opponent—as "a leading Parliamentary orator, and a great man." The historian speaks of him as having retained in his manner "the unaffected simplicity of earlier days," without either the assumption of superiority which might have been natural to one of his eminence, or the official pedantry so common amongst those holding high places in the State. In conversation he seems to have been easy, rapid, and fluent, and, according to Sir A. Alison, was "at once energetic and discursive, enthusiastic, but at times visionary." Westminster reviewers and critics of the time describe him as being too hesitating in political matters, too sensitively conscientious, and too much inclined to study all sides of a question, and find out all kinds of objections to every conceivable course of action. As an orator, he was famous for a torrent of eloquence which sometimes carried men off their feet without, perhaps, convincing them. But he could at times be marvellously conciliatory, and always possessed a great charm of manner, while, as a rule, exhibiting much personal good nature.

Through these circumstances, and with these qualities, Mr. Gladstone held his way during years of increasing reputation, though of uncertain political tenure. With great wisdom, however, he continued to avoid a public quarrel with Palmerston, and waited for the time which he knew must soon come. Writing in his diary, October 17th, 1863, Bishop Wilberforce says: "I now anticipate that Gladstone will be Premier." On December 17th, 1864, he writes: "Gladstone is certainly gaining power. You can hear almost every one say he must be the future Premier." An interesting reference made at this time to the coming leader is contained in a letter written during the autumn of 1863, by Dr. John Brown, the charming author of "Rab and His Friends," to Principal Shairp, of St. Andrews:

> "I was at the Physicians' dinner (Edinburgh) to the Prince, Lord Brougham, Mr. Gladstone, and the other Sauls. . . . Gladstone made a short, but most beautiful speech, in which he referred to the Prince and Brougham, who were sitting together, as the Dawn and the Evening of Life. He spoke of the Association (of Physicians) as a congress of love, emanating from the ever-blessed God, the fountain of all love and good-will. It was simply but greatly done. I was much impressed with him on that Monday. There is a wonderful intensity and sincerity about him, and a sort of boyishness."

The financial statement for 1864 had been another marvel of good fortune and clever manipulation. The moment was one in which few were found to question the beneficence of free trade. Through many and varied causes, the prosperity, commerce, and revenues of the country had, since the Crimean war—and in spite of the war taxes of an ensuing period—developed with giant strides. This year another large surplus was known to exist, and great curiosity was felt as to the disposal of it, and the happy direction in which the people might expect to be relieved of taxation. When, therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose, it was to face another crowded House and distinguished gathering in the galleries. Mr. Gladstone's budgets had, in fact, come to be the recognized political event and oratorical treat of each yearly session of Parliament.

He certainly did not disappoint his audience or the country upon this occasion. His first announcement was that the national expenditure had been reduced by over six millions of dollars, and that the surplus was fifteen millions, less four millions to be expended upon fortifications. He was able to point to the fact that

$350,000,000 had been paid on the national debt since 1855, and that the charge for interest had decreased by $30,000,000. He announced that since 1859, when the Cobden treaty was negotiated, the imports from France had doubled, while the exports to that country had increased from $45,000,000 to $110,000,000. He then stated that the reductions in taxation would include one shilling per hundredweight upon sugar, one penny in the income tax, and fifty per cent. of the duty on fire insurances. As a whole, the Budget was speedily accepted, and the Government resolutions based upon it adopted by the House without division. The fiscal policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be and was assailed, but its complete success was apparent, and made him the chief practical mainstay of an administration which had Palmerston's personal popularity to also fall back upon. Together, the two men made at this time a powerful Ministry; apart, we can only speculate as to what might have happened.

Early in the session Mr. Gladstone introduced a bill for improving the law in connection with the purchase of Government annuities through the medium of Savings Banks, and enabling the Government to grant life insurances. It ultimately passed both Houses, amid general approval, and is admitted to have been "conceived in the true interest of the working classes." A little later and the House was startled by a declaration from the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the question of Reform. Mr. Baines had introduced a motion in favour of lowering the borough franchise, and, though it was defeated by a small majority, Mr. Gladstone's speech showed clearly the narrow thread by which the movement was held back. Only Lord Palmerston's aversion to any present change had, in fact, prevented the stream of new ideas and progressive principles from breaking the barriers of delay. Mr. Gladstone advocated clearly the extension of the franchise, on the ground that it would tend to promote the national unity of classes. "We are told," he also observed, "that the working classes don't agitate; but is it desirable that we should wait until they do agitate? In my opinion, agitation by the working classes upon any political subject whatever is a thing not to be waited for, not to be made a condition previous to any Parliamentary movement, but, on the contrary, is to be deprecated, and, if possible, prevented by wise and provident measures." But the time had not yet come for Reform.

Another incident of the session was a strong attack upon the Government by Mr. Disraeli for its attitude towards the Schleswig-Holstein question. There is little doubt that England was pledged indirectly to uphold the integrity and independence of Denmark. How far that pledge was broken in the failure to resort to war with Prussia, and perhaps France, in a gigantic effort to keep Bismarck from getting hold of the Duchies, is a matter too large for discussion here. The British Government seems, however, to have done its best diplomatically, and Mr. Gladstone made a strong defence in reply to his opponent's speech and motion of censure. In the course of the debate, Mr. Bernal Osborne, a witty critic of the Administration, went out of his way to describe the Chancellor of the Exchequer as "a great and able Minister." Finally, a resolution expressing satisfaction at the course of the Government in not interfering at the present juncture was carried by a small majority.

A significant utterance was made by Mr. Gladstone in March, 1865, in connection with the Irish Church. The House had been asked by a Radical member to declare that the present position of the Irish Establishment was unsatisfactory, and demanded immediate attention. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his speech, declared that while the Government would not accept or act upon the resolution, they were not prepared to deny the abstract truth of the first proposition. The Church was, indeed, in a false position, but no practical remedy had yet been suggested. And a little later he wrote to a correspondent—Dr. Hannah, of Glenalmond—his reasons for taking this attitude. He declared that, in the first place, the question of disestablishment was remote and out of bearing upon practical politics; and, in the second place, that it was so difficult in itself as to render present decision regarding either method or time of dealing with it extremely unwise. But he thought his position, as a Minister and a member for Oxford University, made it incumbent upon him to point out that the state of the Church was beyond doubt unsatisfactory.

The Budget speech in this year was brought forward on April 27th. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was able once more to present a prosperous and pleasant statement. The expenditure had still further decreased, the total diminution of debt was over $20,000,000, the trade with France was steadily increasing, the surplus in hand exceeded $20,000,000; and to his mind much of this was due to "the removal of bars, fetters, and impediments from the path of human industry in the Empire." He announced a reduction of sixpence a pound in the duty on tea, a lowering of the income tax—already at its lowest point—by twopence in the pound, and a further diminution of the fire insurance duties. The total reduction of taxation was to be nearly $27,000,000. Such proposals were naturally received with general pleasure, and Mr. Gladstone's reputation as a masterly financier probably reached its height at this happy moment.

A few months after this, events had reached a crisis. The prolonged term of Parliament came to an end, the elections were held, and the Government sustained by an increased majority. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer was beaten at Oxford. The full significance of this occurrence can only be understood by appreciation of the fact that Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party were standing upon the verge of action concerning the Irish Church and Franchise Reform. But they had been held back by Lord Palmerston, who was to shortly pass away, and by Mr. Gladstone's own connection with Oxford. It had been a long and historic connection. He had been first elected in 1847, at the commencement of the free trade policy, and because, as F. D. Maurice urged at the time, he had acted upon principle in the Maynooth case, and it was "a kind of principle which you need at Oxford." He had been re-elected with dwindling, though still substantial, majorities ever since. And now at the very apotheosis of free trade, and during an election in which his policy was one of the pillars of Ministerial strength in the country, he was destined to be beaten in his own constituency, and amid those scenes of learning and culture which he loved so deeply, and which had so greatly influenced a half of his political lifetime.

The contest attracted the greatest public interest. The poll was to be kept open for five days, and votes could be sent, under restrictions and in a specified manner, to the Vice-Chancellor by mail. A strong and afterwards distinguished Tory, Mr. Gathorne Hardy (Earl Cranbrook), was chosen to oppose Mr. Gladstone, and the contest soon became thoroughly exciting. Not only were politics pure and simple involved, but the interests of the Church were made to do substantial service, one way or the other. Bishops and noblemen, professors and learned societies, Church and Bar and universities, all took great interest in an election which included voters from many parts of the United Kingdom, and ranged on opposite sides men of the most distinguished ability and position. On the first day, Mr. Gladstone was announced as being in a minority of six, on the third day it had increased to seventy-four, and on the fourth day to 230.

It now became apparent that defeat was more than probable. His friends rallied, however, to one more effort, and Sir J. T. Coleridge, as chairman of Mr. Gladstone's committee, issued a circular appeal for support, in the course of which the following words were used:

> "The committee do not scruple to advocate his cause on grounds above the common level of politics. They claim for him the gratitude due to one whose public life has, for eighteen years, reflected a lustre upon the University herself. They confidently invite you to consider whether his pure and exalted character, his splendid abilities, and his eminent services to Church and State, do not constitute the highest of all qualifications for an academical seat, and entitle him to be judged by his constituents as he will assuredly be judged by posterity."

But though this effort lessened the majority against him, it did not avail further, and Mr. Gathorne Hardy was finally declared elected by 180 votes. Sir William Heathcote headed the poll, having had by agreement the support of both parties. Among Mr. Gladstone's supporters in this celebrated contest were the Bishops of Durham, Oxford (Wilberforce), and Chester, Earl Cowper, Prof. Max Muller, the Deans of Christchurch, Westminster, Lichfield, and

Peterborough, Rev. John Keble, Rev. J. B. Mozley, Edward A. Freeman, Dr. Pusey, Prof. Jowett, and Mr. (afterwards Viscount) Cardwell.

The result was received in many different ways. The average Conservative looked upon it as a great party victory. The thinking Conservative, who could look ahead, saw that by this action certain very substantial fetters had been struck off, and that Mr. Gladstone was now at liberty to take decisive steps in the direction of national change or reform. The *Times*, which was then somewhat Liberal in its opinions, declared that, henceforth, Mr. Gladstone belonged to the country and not to the University, and that the influences and traditions which had so deeply coloured his ideas and modified his actions must now gradually lose their power. It spoke of the result as a disgrace, and declared that "it will now stand on record that they have deliberately sacrificed a representative who combined the very highest qualifications, moral and intellectual, for an academical seat, to party spirit, and party spirit alone." The *Daily News* spoke of "the illustrious Minister whom all Europe envies us, and whose name is a household word in every political assembly in the world."

Curiously enough, Mr. Gladstone, who had in so many ways followed the example and revered the opinions of Sir Robert Peel, was in this case compelled to unwillingly imitate his great predecessor. For many years Peel had represented Oxford, but when he found legislation imperative in the Catholic emancipation question he had, in 1829, resigned and stood again for election. But his policy concerning the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland defeated him in the University, as his supposed views upon the Established Church in Ireland were to defeat Mr. Gladstone thirty-six years afterwards. And, just as Sir Robert Peel had gone on from Catholic emancipation to free trade, so it was now feared in Conservative circles that Mr. Gladstone would, politically, go on from bad to worse. Dr. Pusey, intimate friend as he was, voiced this feeling in a letter to the *Churchman*. "Some of those," said the eminent divine, "who concurred in that election will, I fear, mourn hereafter with a double sorrow." He proceeded to point out the danger of making the Church Establishment a party question, and the evil of identifying its interests with any one party. Events were on the horizon, the course of which no one could estimate, and, as the inevitable conflict thickened, "Oxford, I think, will learn to regret her rude severance from one so loyal to the Church, to the faith, and to God." Bishop Wilberforce at the same time wrote recording his sympathy and sorrow for "the best, the noblest, and the truest son of the University and the Church." In his reply, Mr. Gladstone made a very interesting statement:

> "Do not conceal from yourself that my hands are much weakened; it was only as representing Oxford that a man whose opinions are disliked and suspected could expect or could have a title to be heard. I look upon myself now as a person wholly extraneous

to one great class of questions; with respect to legislative and Cabinet matters I am still a unit.

"There have been two great deaths, or transmigrations of spirit, in my political existence—one, very slow, the breaking of ties with my original party; the other very short and sharp, the breaking of the tie with Oxford.

"There will probably be a third, and no more.

"Again, my dear Bishop, I thank you for bearing with my waywardness, and manifesting, in the day of need, your confidence and attachment."

After the contest was closed Mr. Gladstone addressed a valedictory to the members of Convocation, and then went down to South Lancashire, in which teeming hive of industry he had been already nominated. From Manchester he at once issued an address to the electors, in the course of which he significantly observed: "You are conversant—few so much so—with the legislation of the last thirty-five years. You have seen, you have felt, its results. You cannot fail to have observed the verdict which the country generally has within the last eight days pronounced upon the relative claims and positions of the two great political parties with respect to that legislation of the past, and to the prospective administration of public affairs." And, shortly afterwards, he appeared before an immense audience in the Free Trade Hall, and in words which rang through the United Kingdom as a substantial evidence that the past was buried, and that he was now a Liberal in deed and in truth, he declared that "at last, my friends, I am come among you—and I am come unmuzzled." The enthusiastic and prolonged cheering which followed this famous sentence marked the public and final passage of a great man from Toryism to Liberalism.

He went on to declare that he had been driven from his seat after an arduous struggle of eighteen years, but, he added, "I have loved the University with a great and passionate love, and as long as I breathe that attachment will continue; if my affection is of the smallest advantage to that great, that ancient, that noble institution, that advantage, such as it is, Oxford will possess as long as I live. . . . By no act of mine I am free to come among you. But, having been thus set free, I need hardly tell you that it is with joy, with thankfulness, with enthusiasm, that I now, at this eleventh hour, make my appeal to the heart and mind of South Lancashire." In a subsequent speech, he portrayed the difference between Oxford and Lancashire. That difference really embodied the change in his own political career—though he did not say so. "We see nobly represented in that ancient institution the most prominent features that relate to the past of England. I come into South Lancashire, and I find here around me an assemblage of different phenomena. I find development of industry; I find growth of enterprise; I find prevalence of toleration; and I find an ardent desire for freedom." And then he continued in the following words:

> "If there be one duty more than another incumbent upon the public men of England, it is to establish and maintain harmony between the past of our glorious history and the future which is still in store for her. . . . I am, if possible, more firmly attached to the institutions of my country than I was when, a boy, I wandered among the sand-hills of Seaforth. But experience has brought with it lessons. I have learned that there is wisdom in a policy of trust, and folly in a policy of mistrust. I have observed the effect which has been produced by Liberal legislation; and if we are told that the feeling of the country is, in the best and broadest sense, Conservative, honesty compels us to admit that that result has been brought about by Liberal legislation."

It was, indeed, a new world in the very centre of which Mr. Gladstone now found himself placed; and the changed environment which thus followed upon his election by a good majority is, no doubt, responsible for the quick development of opinion which ensued in his own mind. He was, in fact, being prepared for the Liberal leadership in the Commons, which came almost immediately as the result of Lord Palmerston's death. The latter had observed to Lord Shaftesbury, shortly before the end came, that "Gladstone will soon have it all his own way, and, whenever he gets my place, we shall have strange doings." And, from the Conservative point of view, he was fully justified in this curious assertion. The death of the Premier came very suddenly. People had, somehow, come to regard the eighty or more years of the genial statesman as comparative juvenility, and his wonderful buoyancy of character and sturdiness of appearance made this impression even stronger as time went on. But the news of his passing away stirred the feelings of sincere affection, which were almost everywhere felt for him, into a wave of national sentiment. Mr. Gladstone, in a letter to Sir Anthony Panizzi, referred in characteristic language to the event, and to the perhaps single bond of personal sympathy which had, in life, united him to Palmerston: "Death has, indeed, laid low the most towering antlers in all the forest. No man in England will more sincerely mourn Lord Palmerston than you. Your warm heart, your long and close friendship with him, and your sense of all he had said and done for Italy, all so bound you to him that you will deeply feel this loss. As for myself, I am stunned."

And the same sense of proportion, the same capacity of neither saying too much nor too little, marked his subsequent tributes to the undoubtedly noble Englishman who had gone. In the House, he was able to speak of the manliness, straightforwardness, and courage which had so stamped the late Premier in public estimation; of "his incomparable tact and ingenuity—his command of fence—his delight, his old English delight, in a fair stand-up fight." His genial temper and desire to avoid whatever might exasperate were referred to, as well as a nature which Mr. Gladstone declared to have been incapable of enduring anger or the sentiment of wrath. A little later, the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, seconded by Mr. Disraeli, an address to the Queen asking Her Majesty to order the erection of a monument in Westminster Abbey. The necessary funds were, of course, voted.

Mr. Gladstone was now dominant in his party. Earl Russell was still, however, the nominal leader, and upon him fell the immediate—and brief—mantle of the Premiership. In writing him regarding the Ministry, which had to be at once reconstructed, Mr. Gladstone put his views plainly on record: "I am most willing to retire. On the other hand, I am bound by conviction, even more than by credit, to the principle of progressive reduction in our military and naval establishments, and in the charges for them, under the favouring circumstances which we appear to enjoy." And he was now in a position to enforce his opinions upon party policy, and upon any Liberal Government which might be in office. In November, the new Ministry was arranged, largely with the old men. Lord Russell became Prime Minister for the second and last time. The Earl of Clarendon succeeded him at the Foreign Office. Mr. Gladstone remained at the Exchequer, and assumed the leadership in the Commons. Mr. Edward Cardwell, who had previously succeeded the Duke of Newcastle, retained the Colonial Office, which was now important as an influence in the coming Confederation of British North America. The Marquess of Hartington became Secretary for War, and another rising man in the person of Mr. George J. Goschen became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

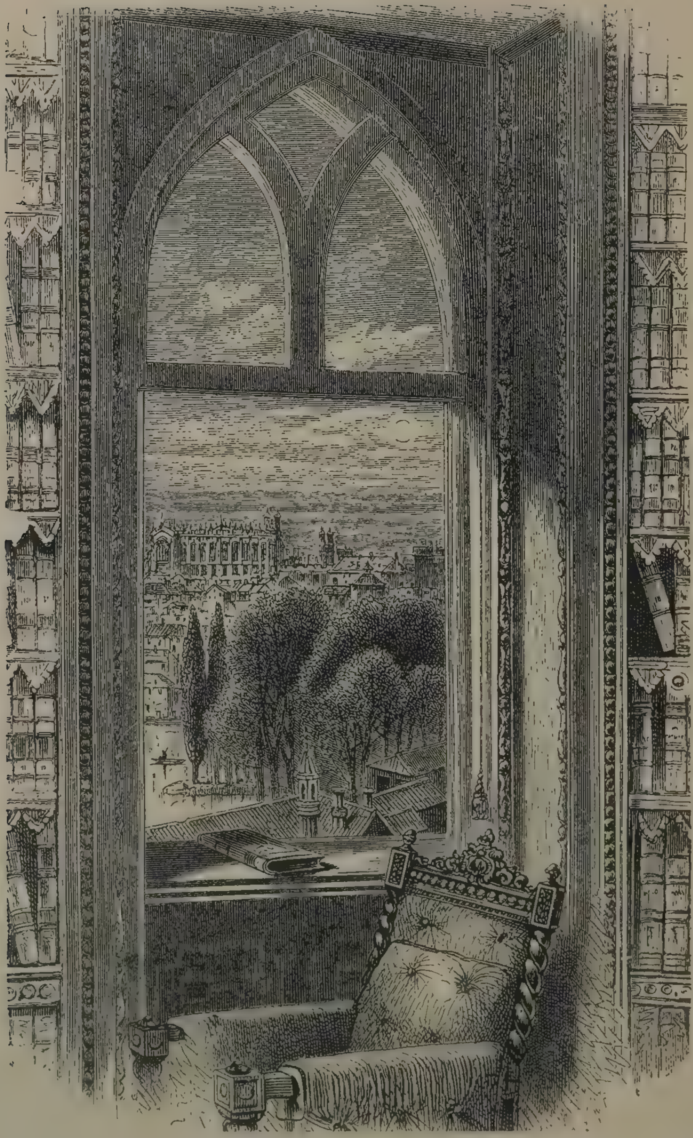
During the session of 1866, which followed, Mr. Gladstone introduced his eighth Budget. He was able, once more, to announce a flourishing revenue, a still further reduction in expenditure, the conclusion of trade treaties with Belgium, Italy, and the German Zollverein, a reduction of the tea duties and income tax to fourpence in the pound, and the payment of $25,000,000 upon the national debt. He also outlined an elaborate scheme for the conversion of part of the debt into terminable annuities, but this had to be postponed as a result of the political upheaval which took place later on. Needless to say the proposals, as a whole, were satisfactory to Parliament and to the country.

As the practical leader of the Liberal party, Mr. Gladstone now stood in a position of apparent, but not really, great power. He had a fair majority in the House, but it was a Palmerstonian majority, and that meant trouble in any overt step toward the changes which appeared necessary, and regarding which he would have to shortly declare himself. With his own personal domination in the party, the authority of Whiggism was gone, but very substantial shreds of its old-time influence remained, and were to assert themselves with vigour in the succeeding and memorable days of this stormy session. But whether the near future involved Parliamentary success or failure did not much matter. He was now in a position before the nation which made

Archbishop Trench, of Dublin—by no means a close political friend—declare in a private letter that "nothing can hinder Gladstone from being the most remarkable man of the age."

H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT,

Prince Consort of Great Britain.



VIEW FROM THE LIBRARY WINDOW OF WINDSOR CASTLE.

CHAPTER XVI.

REFORM OF THE FRANCHISE.

IT was inevitable that the first great effort of Earl Russell's Administration should be in the direction of Reform. Neither elevation to the Peerage, nor the high place of Prime Minister, nor the cooling ardours of his own party, could check the impulsive ambition and reforming aspirations of a Lord John Russell. Since 1832 he had never lost sight of his intention to improve upon the famous measure of that year, whenever opportunity might offer. Twenty years after that date he brought in a Reform Bill, which had, after a struggle, to be abandoned. In 1854 he tried again, and six years later he introduced another measure, but once more it had to be withdrawn. And now there seemed a very real chance of success.

With himself in office as Premier; with Mr. Gladstone leading the House of Commons—emancipated from the influence of Oxford, and victorious in a great popular constituency; with an estimated Liberal majority of 67 in the House; with the country, in his opinion, more favourably disposed towards Reform than it had been for very many years; and with a strong Ministry behind him, Lord Russell may be pardoned for thinking that he was about to close a political career, which had been rocked from its inception in the very cradle of change, by being carried to victory upon the waves of another great and successful reform.

That he was doomed to disappointment illustrates a peculiar fate which seems to have followed this statesman throughout an eminent and useful life. Brought up amid surroundings which made political power the natural crown of his career; receiving the whole influence of the great Ducal family of Bedford, in days when aristocratic Whiggism was the dominant force in English politics; nurtured amidst the noblest utterances of a period famed for its statesmen and orators; having as his friends the master-spirits of the time, and a seat in the Government as a sort of inherited right; he yet in early days devoted himself to Reform, as Palmerston did to Foreign policy, or Gladstone to Finance. It was the very breath of his nostrils, and the predominating passion of his life.

But his destiny, or his strange personal peculiarities, or the too rapid march of the times in a myriad directions, seem to have entirely changed the popular impression concerning him, and to have made his career more than paradoxical in many of its aspects. The enthusiastic, hot-headed young politician of the century's third decade became transformed, through his cold and indifferent manner, into a statesman famous, not only for frigidity of demeanour, but for alleged coldness of purpose and policy. So marked was his reputation in this direction that all England appreciated the celebrated lines of Bulwer Lytton, in "The New Timon":

> "How formed to lead, if not too proud to please,
> His fame would fire you, but his manners freeze;
> Like, or dislike, he does not care a jot,
> He wants your vote, but your affections not.
> And while his doctrines ripen day by day,
> His frost-nipped party pines itself away."

Thus the early friend of Catholic Emancipation became detested by many as the author of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill; the great Reformer of 1832 appeared as the parent of a lot of unsuccessful and petty Reform Bills; the honest champion of liberty became known abroad as "the minister who disappointed Denmark and abandoned Poland"; the sincere abolitionist became associated in American history and memories with support, or at least sympathy, given to the Confederate States. Such was the position of the Prime Minister and veteran Liberal, who now handed over to his lieutenant in the Commons all his hopes and past efforts in the direction of Reform, for realization and present achievement.

Mr. Gladstone was ready. The Queen had opened the new Parliament in person for the first time since the Prince Consort's death. The speech from the throne had included the important and expected announcement "that the attention of Parliament will be called to the result (of information to be procured), with a view to such improvements in the laws which regulate the right of voting in the election of members to the House of Commons as may tend to strengthen our free institutions, and conduce to the public welfare." This was certainly a cautious enough announcement—too much so to please the extreme Radicals, who publicly declared that the old Whig influence was being exerted to hold back Mr. Gladstone, and to check the well-known aspirations of members of the Government such as Milner Gibson, Charles Pelham Villiers, and Lord Russell himself. Certainly the Whigs predominated in its composition, as they had done in the composition of all Liberal cabinets since 1832.

However that may be, the condition of the country was assuredly unfavourable to the carrying out of any extreme policy. The cattle plague, in 1865, had spread through England like a fire upon the boundless prairie, and had carried off more than 40,000 head. At this very time, cattle were dying at the rate of many thousands a week. Financial distress was everywhere apparent, and was about to break into a commercial panic. There were rumours of cholera, threatened troubles in Ireland, and widespread Fenian alarms. War seemed imminent on the continent, Jamaica was in a turmoil, and Abyssinia was about to contribute one of England's lesser wars. More important than all, to those interested in politics, was the fact that the Commons had just been elected, and that the passage of a Reform Bill meant dissolution, and the worries and expense of another contest. So that in spite of Lord Russell's hopefulness and belief in this as a favourable moment, it was rather far from being worthy of his faith.

On March 12th, 1866, amid much of curiosity and alarm, Mr. Gladstone rose, before a crowded and intensely interested audience, to introduce the Government Reform Bill; to mark his public passage of the political Rubicon; and to reveal the Tory of early days in the new and complete part of Liberalism. After reviewing the recent history of the question, he dealt with the details of the scheme. What he said, and what he proposed, may be summarized in a few words.

The franchise in the Counties was to run from fourteen pounds up to fifty, which it was supposed would add 171,000 persons to the electoral lists. Certain privileges were to be given lease-holders, and a savings bank franchise—fifty pounds deposited in two years—was to be established, together with a lodger franchise. A reduction of three pounds in the Borough franchise was to be given. The total number of new voters created was to be in the neighbourhood of 400,000.

The address was one of considerable eloquence, and in its peroration appeared well worthy of the orator who delivered it. He declared the issue to be whether the enfranchisement should be carried downward or not; whether the pledges of parties and parliaments should be kept or not; whether the essential credit and usefulness and character of the country's government should be maintained, or should not. He refused to consider any addition to the political power of the working classes as being fraught with danger, and characteristically enough declined to look upon the enfranchisement of the people in any degree as clearing the way for "some Trojan horse approaching the walls of the sacred city, and filled with armed men bent upon ruin, plunder, and conflagration."

He believed, rather, that these persons whom they desired to enfranchise should be welcomed as recruits to an army, or children to a family. And, above all, he urged that after the decision had been come to, and the boon conferred, it should be done gracefully, and not as though the House were compounding with danger or misfortune. Finally, he begged them, with fervour in his tones, and sincerity and enthusiasm in every line of his speaking face, to "give to these persons new interests in the Constitution, new interests which, by the beneficent processes of the law of nature and of Providence, shall beget in them new attachment; for the attachment of the people to the Throne, the institutions and the laws under which they live, is, after all, more than gold or silver, more than fleets and armies, at once the strength, the glory, and the safety of the land."

But all the eloquence of his speech was not sufficient to really stir the House of Commons. The mass of the Liberals were satisfied, but not enthusiastically favourable. Some of the party, weak in numerical proportion, but strong in debate and ability, were dissatisfied, and they became exceedingly enthusiastic in opposition to it. The Conservatives, meeting at the house of the late Marquess of Salisbury, decided to oppose it to the hilt. And for some time there appeared to be very great indifference regarding the proposal in the country at large. This fact naturally reacted upon the House and promoted freedom of discussion, while encouraging many to opposition who would otherwise have recorded, in the end, a silent but regretful vote for the measure. The debates which followed will be always famous in English history for the orations which they produced and the reputations which were made. The scathing invective of Lowe, the bitter sarcasm of Horsman, the eloquence of Bright, the keen incisiveness of Cranborne, the wit and skill of Disraeli, the impassioned utterances of Gladstone, are writ large in the annals of this Parliament.

There were many reasons for the Liberal secession which ensued. Moderate members of the party were somewhat afraid of Mr. Gladstone. They had been elected to follow the easy and non-progressive leadership of Palmerston, and now found themselves under bonds to a statesman whose opinions were not clearly understood, but who was noted for his passionate earnestness and intense energy, and for a certain undefined faculty of convincing himself that some particular course was the right one, even though he had been previously opposed to it. Even Bishop Wilberforce, writing on the day that the Reform Bill was introduced, voiced this general feeling of doubt as to the Liberal leader's power of holding his followers in line: "Gladstone has risen entirely to his position," he observes, "but there is a general feeling of insecurity for the Ministry, and the Reform Bill to be launched to-night is thought a bad rock."

The real lion in the path was to be Robert Lowe. Already distinguished as a politician in the Australian Colonies, he had come home to win a place in a wider sphere, and had, in fact, occupied posts in two previous Administrations. But, for some reason or other, he had not been included in the present one. Neither had his speeches, as yet, attracted particular attention; and his physical qualities were certainly not such as would be expected in an orator. His appearance was not good, his sight was defective, his gestures ungainly, his voice harsh and unpleasant. Yet he rose upon the evening following Mr. Gladstone's speech, and won laurels of applause and reputation which will never be forgotten in the records of English eloquence. What Emerson calls "the grandeur of absolute ideas" seemed to place his audience almost in the hollow of his hand, while his brilliant diction and powerful invective gave him a position in these debates similar to that held by Disraeli in the great Corn Law discussions. That he did not use his opportunities to the same ultimate end was due to want of tact and personal popularity, not to lack of intellect or ambition.

After a severe analysis of the measure, Mr. Lowe, in this first speech, proceeded to deal with the working classes in a way which was never forgotten by them. "You have had," said he, "the opportunity of knowing some of the constituencies of this country, and I ask, if you want venality, ignorance, drunkenness, and the means of intimidation—if you want impulsive, unreflective, and violent people, where will you go to look for them—to the top or to the bottom?" He concluded with the following peroration:

> "It may be that we are destined to avoid this enormous danger with which we are confronted, and not, to use the language of my right honourable friend, to compound with danger and misfortune. But, sir, it may be otherwise; and all I can say is that, if my right honourable friend does succeed in carrying this measure through Parliament, when the passions and interests of the day are gone by, I do not envy him his retrospect. I covet not a single leaf of the laurels that may encircle his brow. I do not envy him his triumph. His be the glory of carrying it; mine of having to the utmost of my poor ability resisted it."

Another clever Liberal—really more of a Tory than a Liberal—followed, and joined his friend in a fierce attack upon Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Horsman's ability was admitted, but in some way his political career had not proved a brilliant success. Upon this occasion, he described the address of the party leader as being "another bid for power, another promise made to be broken, another political fraud and Parliamentary juggle." This harsh language brought Mr. Bright to his feet, and added a great speech to the growing measure of the debate. In now historic words, he referred to Mr. Horsman as having "retired into what may be called his political Cave of Adullam, to which he invites every one who is in distress, and every one who is discontented." Then he spoke of the "party of two" which, he declared, to have been formed by Lowe and Horsman, and of the harmony apparently prevalent between them. But there was one difficulty. "This party of two is like the Scotch terrier that was so covered with hair that you could not tell which was the head and which was the tail."

Such a sally naturally produced great laughter, and Mr. Bright concluded by strongly supporting the bill as likely to give solidity and durability to everything that was noble and best in the constitution of the realm. Mr. Lowe, however, was not the man to be attacked with impunity, and he speedily responded in words which have the ring of an old-time Tory eloquence about them: "Demagogues," he declared, "are the commonplaces of history; they are found everywhere where there is found popular commotion. They have all a family likeness. Their names float lightly on the stream of time; they finally contrive to be handed down somehow, but they are as little to be regarded for themselves as the foam which rides on the top of the stormy wave, and bespatters the rock it cannot shake."

While this battle of oratory was going on, it was announced that Earl Grosvenor (now the Duke of Westminster) would move an amendment on behalf of the Conservatives, to the effect that the House, "while willing to consider, with a view to its settlement, the question of Parliamentary reform," was of the opinion that it was inexpedient to deal with the measure until the whole scheme of the Government was before the country. It was hoped that many of the Palmerstonian Whigs would be got to support the amendment, but there was little real hope of defeating the Ministry. And Mr. Gladstone declared emphatically that he would not only oppose it, but treat it as a vote of want of confidence. The second reading of the bill was to take place after the Easter recess, and in the interim great efforts were made to arouse the country. Large, and in some cases enthusiastic, meetings were held, and Mr. Bright used all his eloquence on behalf of the Government. In one letter he went rather too far by calling the Opposition "a dirty conspiracy."

But the greatest demonstration was at Liverpool, where an immense gathering was addressed by Mr. Gladstone, the Duke of Argyle, Mr. Goschen, and others. The Chancellor of the Exchequer rang out a very clear note of defiance for the coming struggle. "We stake ourselves," he declared, "we stake our existence as a Government, and we also stake our political character, on the adoption of the bill in its main provisions. . . . We have passed the Rubicon—we have broken the bridge, and burned the boats behind us."

On the 12th of April, Mr. Gladstone opened the second and greatest debate upon the subject in the House of Commons. He defended the bill, defended the working classes against Mr. Lowe's onslaught, criticized the Conservatives, declared that even a further reduction of the franchise would not be dangerous, and urged upon the House the need of deeds, not words. Earl Grosvenor then moved his amendment, seconded by Lord Stanley (fifteenth, and late Earl of Derby). Sir E. Bulwer Lytton followed in a speech which stirred the Commons to its depths, and surprised the Conservatives into a passion of enthusiasm. As with Lowe, this single deliverance was sufficient to prove him an orator. He concluded with an amusing commentary upon Mr. Gladstone's claim that the working classes were "our own flesh and blood," and asked him what he would some day say to the other millions who would appear and inquire, "Are we not fellow-Christians? Are we not your own flesh and blood?" And then he pictured the reply: "Well, that is true. For my own part, in my individual capacity, I cannot see that there is any danger of admitting you, but still, you know, it is wise to proceed gradually. A seven-pound voter is real flesh and blood; but you are only gradual flesh and blood.

Read Darwin, and learn that you are fellow-Christians in an imperfect state of development."

Mr. John Stuart Mill warmly supported the measure. Sir Hugh Cairns feared that "the balance" of the Constitution would be impaired. Mr. Horsman declared that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's phrase about broken bridges and burnt boats was the indication of a desperate condition, and was not calculated to inspire confidence. Mr. Bright argued powerfully in favour of the bill. He claimed that it would only admit to the suffrage some 116,000 real working-men, and would give but one-fourth of the electoral power in the boroughs to a class which formed three-quarters of the population. Mr. Lowe followed in a brilliant attack upon the whole scheme. He feared the combination of the working classes against the other classes in the country, and pictured the consequent progress in the "downward direction of democracy." In a final and most eloquent sentence he summed up his fears:

> "Surely the heroic work of so many centuries, the matchless achievements of so many wise heads and strong hands, deserve a nobler consummation than to be sacrificed at the shrine of revolutionary passion, or by the maudlin enthusiasm of humanity. But, if we fall, we shall fall deservedly. Uncoerced by any external force, not borne down by any internal calamity, but in the full plethora of our wealth and the surfeit of our too exuberant prosperity, with our own rash and inconsiderate hands, we are about to pluck down on our heads the venerable temple of our liberty and our glory. History may tell of other acts as signally disastrous, but of none more wanton, none more disgraceful."

Lord Cranborne opposed the measure, and then gave way to Mr. Disraeli, who, in a three hours' speech, handled the Government proposals with vigour and lucidity. He declared—and this with truth—that the present Parliament had not been elected to deal with Reform, pointed out the admittedly incomplete nature of the measure, and claimed that the full details should have been given before the House was asked to pass upon it. "He was perfectly willing to consider the question of extending the county franchise." But he did not believe in an "indiscriminate multitude" of voters, and considered that they "should be numerous enough to be independent, but select enough to be responsible." And then he declared that, while approving of American institutions—in America—he thought nothing could be more disastrous than their introduction into England, as seemed to be threatened in this bill. He concluded with keen denunciations of Mr. Bright and "the demagogues who pose as the parasites of the working classes."

The great battle terminated with an equally great utterance by Mr. Gladstone. Rising to his feet at one o'clock in the morning, he proceeded to deal with the various arguments against his measure. Without going into details, it is interesting to note how Mr. Lowe's bitter invective must have stirred the usual good nature of his former—and future—colleague. He took occasion to deny that words of his, at a recent meeting, had been meant to disparage the members of the House. They had referred, "not to the House of Commons, but to certain depraved and crooked little men." And he confessed to having had Lowe first and foremost in his mind when thus speaking. Then he replied to his critic's taunts about having voted and spoken at the Oxford Union against the Reform Bill of 1832, in words which are more than important in any consideration of his political development and position:

> "It is true, I deeply regret it, but I was bred under the shadow of the great name of Canning, and every influence connected with that name governed the politics of my childhood and of my youth. With Canning I rejoiced in the removal of religious disabilities, and in the character which he gave to our policy abroad; with Canning I rejoiced in the opening which he made towards the establishment of free commercial interchanges between nations; with Canning, and under the shadow of that great name, and under the shadow of that yet more venerable name of Burke, I grant my youthful mind and imagination were impressed, just the same as the mature mind of the right honourable gentleman is now impressed. . . . My position, sir, in regard to the Liberal party is, in all points, the opposite of Earl Russell's. I have none of the claims he possesses. I came among you an outcast from those with whom I associated, driven from them, I admit, by no arbitrary act, but by the slow and resistless forces of conviction. I came among you, to make use of the legal phraseology, *in forma pauperis*. I had nothing to offer you but faithful and honourable service. . . . You received me with kindness, indulgence, generosity, and, I may even say, with some measure of confidence. And the relation between us has assumed such a form that you can never be my debtors, but that I must forever be in your debt."

Mr. Gladstone concluded, amid intense interest and a rising storm of almost electric excitement, what a listener has described "as the grandest oration ever delivered by the greatest orator of his age." His last words were well fitted for the occasion: "I shall not attempt to measure, with precision, the forces that are to be arrayed against us in the coming issue. At some point of the contest you," and here he faced his opponents, "may possibly succeed. You may drive us from our seats. You may bury the bill that we have introduced. But . . . you cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side. The great social forces which move onwards in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of our debates does not, for a moment, impede or disturb—those great social forces are against you; they are marshalled on our side; and the banner which we now carry in this fight, though perhaps at some moment it may droop over our sinking heads, yet it soon again will float in the eye of Heaven, and it will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three Kingdoms, perhaps not to an easy, but to a certain and to a not far-distant, victory."

When the vote came to be announced, it was found that Lord Grosvenor's amendment had been defeated by only five votes—318 to 313—in the largest division ever recorded in the House. Such a victory was a disaster; and, amid a whirlwind of Conservative cheers and counter-applause from the other side, Mr. Gladstone moved the adjournment. The central figure for the moment was Mr. Lowe. All sides agreed that he had proven himself the eloquent, vindictive, and powerful incarnation of an opposition which now seemed destined to succeed. Flushed, enthusiastic, and triumphant, he seemed to stand as the avenging Nemesis of a Government which had not appreciated his previous services, and of a leader who had not comprehended the strength of the innate Conservatism which existed amongst his followers.

Mr. Gladstone, however, did not accept this as a defeat. Both sides were agreed upon the necessity of reform, and the only difference was in questions of detail, and in the application of a general principle. A few days later, he, therefore, introduced his measure for the redistribution of seats to follow upon the increased franchise. An amusing incident of the ensuing debate was Mr. J. Stuart Mill's denial of the statement that he had called the Conservatives the stupidest of parties: "I never meant to say that Conservatives are generally stupid. I meant to say that stupid persons are generally Conservatives." Needless to say, this graceful compliment was fully appreciated. Another episode arose out of some reference by Mr. Bright to the Constitution, and his love for it. Mr. Lowe observed, in the course of an onslaught upon the redistribution measure, that the Radical leader, standing upon the Constitution, reminded him of the American squib:

> "Here we stand upon the Constitution, by thunder,
> It's a fact of which there are bushels of proofs;
> For how could we trample upon it, I wonder,
> If it was'nt continually under our hoofs?"

Finally, after continued debates, Lord Dunkellin moved an amendment to the effect that the borough franchise should be based on the principle of rating rather than of rental. This Mr. Gladstone strongly opposed, with the unexpected result of a Government defeat by 315 to 304. Amid a storm of Tory and Adullamite cheers the announcement was made, and shortly afterwards the wearing but brilliant struggle ended in the retirement of the Government. A brief delay occurred by Her Majesty the Queen trying to find some common ground for joint action between the two parties. On Lord Russell submitting his resignation, she wrote to him (June 19th) as follows:

> "In the present state of Europe, and the apathy which Lord Russell himself admits to exist in the country on the subject of Reform, the Queen cannot think it consistent with the duty which the Ministers owe to herself and the country that they should abandon their posts in consequence of their defeat on a matter of detail (not of principle) on a question which can never be settled unless all sides are prepared to make concessions; and she must, therefore, ask them to reconsider their decision."

But, as might have been expected after debates of such a stormy and heated nature, the condition was altogether too volcanic to permit of compromise. A week later, therefore, the Russell-Gladstone Government had ceased to exist. In the ensuing session a Reform Bill was carried by a Conservative Administration, but it was long before the historic scenes and battles of 1866 were equalled in the House of Commons. Certainly the Irish Church discussions did not compare with them in eloquence and intensity. And, through it all, Mr. Gladstone had steadily added to his great reputation as an orator and rhetorical debater. Mr. Duncan McLaren, the well-known Radical M.P. for Edinburgh, during many years, says of this period in a private letter:

> "Mr. Gladstone sat there, from the first till the last, a perfect monument of patience. I was often amazed to see how, when pelted by foes from the opposite side and by those who were sitting behind him—and those honourable friends from his own side generally pelted him with the greatest severity—I was amazed to see how he could reply to those attacks with the degree of calmness and good nature he manifested, and how he always avoided ascribing any improper motives to them."

There were, of course, exceptions, but only enough to prove the rule. Lord Houghton (Monckton Milnes) wrote that in the debates, as a whole, "Gladstone has shown a fervour of conviction which has won him the attachment of three hundred men, and the honour of the rest of the House." As a matter of fact, a stand-up battle of this nature was required in order to make him the real personal leader of his party. And so also with Disraeli. Meantime, Lord Derby had formed his third administration. As previously with the Peelites, so now he endeavoured to gain the adhesion of the Adullamites or disaffected Whigs. But neither Lord Clarendon nor Mr. Lowe would accept office, though they promised an independent support. The Cabinet was, therefore, formed of solid Conservative timber. Mr. Disraeli again became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Stanley, who had distinguished himself by seconding the famous Grosvenor amendment, and was supposed to possess an unusual amount of sound common sense, was given the Foreign Office. The Earl of Carnarvon, a rising man of cultured ability, became Colonial Secretary, and Viscount Cranborne, whose reputation was already great as a caustic critic of the Liberal party, took the Indian Office. Sir Stafford Northcote became President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Gathorne Hardy was President of the Poor Law Board, and Lord John Manners took charge of the Woods and Forests Department.

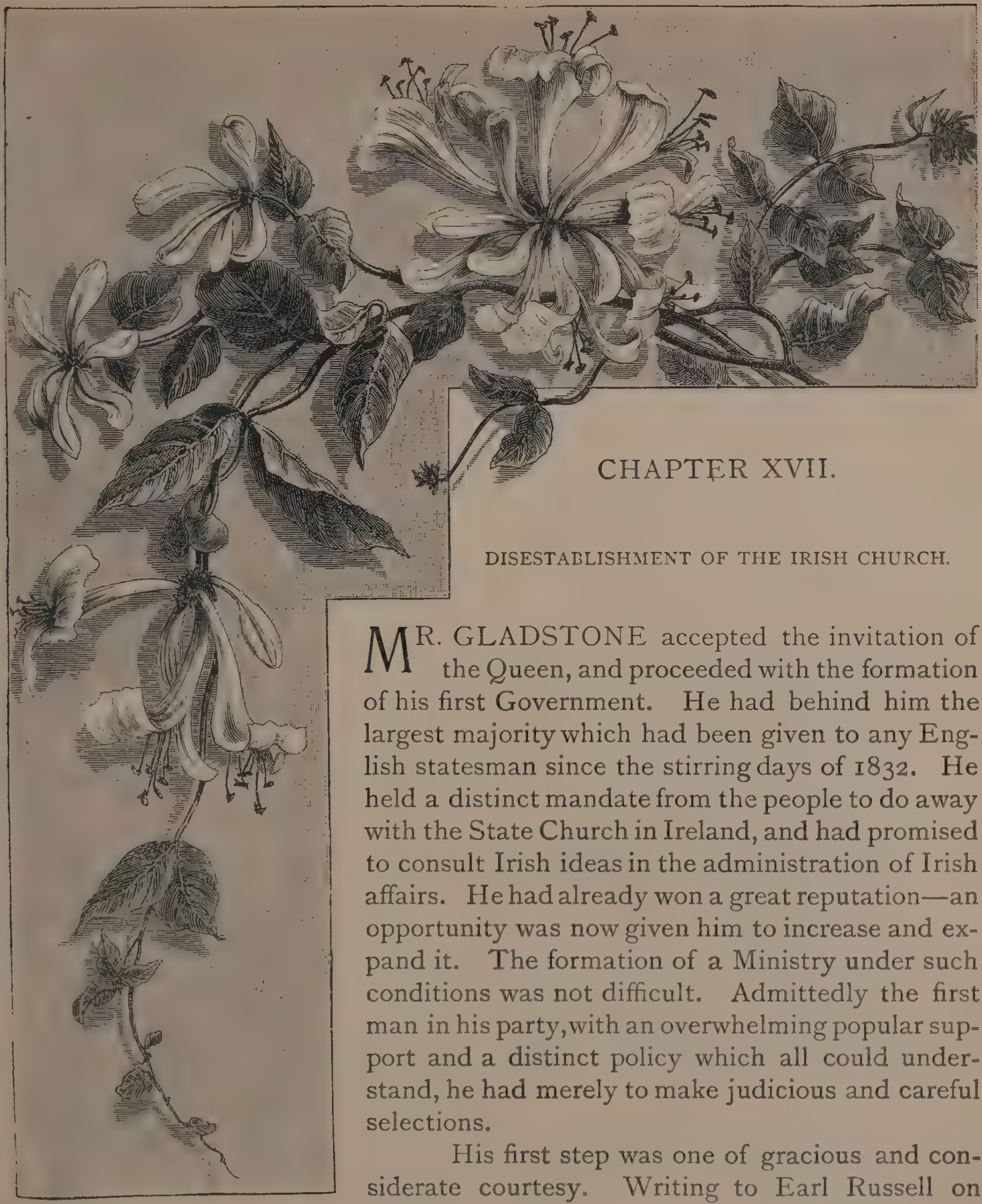
The new Government, like that headed by Lord Derby in 1858, was a sort of Conservative forlorn hope. It held office with a nominal Whig and Liberal majority against it of nearly seventy. But the break in the ranks of the Opposition upon the Reform question was too serious to mend easily, and was very apt to extend to other matters. So they did their best, and in 1867 really carried, in a modified form, the changes for which Mr. Gladstone had made so gallant a struggle. During the months which passed before Parliament assembled, great mass meetings were held in various places; a serious riot occurred in Hyde Park in connection with a Reform League demonstration; an open-air meeting held near Birmingham was said to have numbered 250,000 people; and violent denunciations of Lord Derby and Mr. Lowe were more common than was altogether wise or pleasant. Meanwhile Mr. Disraeli was preparing his scheme for the solution of the much-vexed problem. It had become evident that the country was now fairly aroused, and that, as Mr. Gladstone said in speaking to the address when Parliament opened in February, a speedy settlement was imperative.

To go into details is unnecessary. It is, perhaps, sufficient to say that Mr. Disraeli proposed to lower the qualification for franchise all round, but in such a way as to still preserve some material stake in the community as a factor in the voter's privilege. Four close boroughs were to be disfranchised, and twenty-three small boroughs were to each lose one member. These seats were to be apportioned amongst the populous centres, and it was expected that the general result would add 400,000 people to the voters' list. At first it was intended to proceed by resolution and by the non-party method, but the Opposition, including 289 members, met in caucus and decided to refuse their support to the proposal. Mr. Disraeli, therefore, had to announce a Government measure, and three members of the Government at once resigned—Lord Cranborne, Lord Carnarvon, and General Peel. The first-named afterwards declared that, if the Conservative party accepted the bill, they would be committing political suicide. And, if being out of power from 1868 to 1874 was political suicide, then Lord Salisbury—as he became a little later—was not far wrong.

But Mr. Disraeli was finally able to carry everything before him. Lord Houghton tells us in his diary, at this time, that "I met Gladstone at breakfast. He seems quite awed with the diabolical cleverness of Dizzy." And there really appears to be no doubt of the general effect of Disraeli's able party leadership in this session. Mr. Beresford-Hope, who was one of those Tories who could not bolt the bill, declared during the debates that, "sink or swim, dissolution or no dissolution, whether he was in the next Parliament or out of it, he for one, with his whole heart and conscience, would vote against the Asian mystery." But the "Asian mystery" was too strong for this antagonist, as he had proved to be for much greater ones. Many changes were, of course, made in Committee before the measure finally passed, and much was done at the dictation or through the influence of Mr. Gladstone. The latter, however, did not have altogether a pleasant time of it. Many things he would not support in the bill, others it was not politically wise to support, although, perhaps, he would have liked to have done so. Nor could he always carry his party with him, and upon one occasion, at least, he actually withdrew for an interval from the leadership. But, finally, the bill passed, and on the 15th of July the long contest was over. Perhaps the most notable feature in this second series of debates had been the tremendous onslaught which Lord Cranborne made upon his former leader and his future chief. The policy of Mr. Disraeli was based, in his opinion, upon "the ethics of the political adventurer," and a temporary success had been won at the cost of "a political betrayal which has no parallel."

Parliament, however, had lately heard so much of brilliant and bitter invective that it was as ready to forget these attacks as Mr. Disraeli and Lord Salisbury were afterwards willing to bury the memory of them. The Reform Bill was now law; and, a little later, Lord Derby resigned, as a result of illness, and was succeeded in the Premiership, for a brief and troubled period, by his clever lieutenant. The dissolution of Parliament followed, and, with a great Liberal triumph at the polls, and amid a general demand from the people, Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister. Perhaps, in looking back at these stormy political years, no more fitting words could be found to close a summary of Mr. Gladstone's share in the strenuous conflict than those used by John Bright in addressing, during 1867, a mass of people at Birmingham:

> "I will venture to say this, that, since 1832, there has been no man of the official rank or class, and no statesman who has imparted into this question of Reform so much of conviction, so much of earnestness, so much of zeal, as has been imparted during the last two years by the leader of the Liberal party. Who is there in the House of Commons who equals him in the knowledge of all political questions? Who equals him in earnestness? Who equals him in courage and fidelity to his convictions? If these gentlemen who say they will not follow him have any one who is equal, let them show him. If they can point out any statesman who can add dignity and grandeur to the stature of Mr. Gladstone, let them produce him."



CHAPTER XVII.

DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE IRISH CHURCH.

MR. GLADSTONE accepted the invitation of the Queen, and proceeded with the formation of his first Government. He had behind him the largest majority which had been given to any English statesman since the stirring days of 1832. He held a distinct mandate from the people to do away with the State Church in Ireland, and had promised to consult Irish ideas in the administration of Irish affairs. He had already won a great reputation—an opportunity was now given him to increase and expand it. The formation of a Ministry under such conditions was not difficult. Admittedly the first man in his party, with an overwhelming popular support and a distinct policy which all could understand, he had merely to make judicious and careful selections.

His first step was one of gracious and considerate courtesy. Writing to Earl Russell on December 3rd, he said: "I have this morning undertaken, by Her Majesty's command, to attempt the formation of a new Administration. In proceeding with this task, I cannot, without much misgiving, compare myself with you, and with others so much more competent than I am, in whose steps I am thus endeavouring to tread. . . . You have an experience and knowledge to which no living statesman can pretend. Of the benefit to be derived from it, I am sure that all with whom I can be likely to act would be deeply sensible. Would it be too great an invasion of your independence to ask you to consider whether you could afford to become a member of the Cabinet, without the weight of other responsibilities?" The veteran Reformer, however, felt unable to accept the request contained in this characteristic letter, preferring to remain in a state of semi-retirement.

Nor could Sir Roundell Palmer consent at this time to accept the Lord Chancellorship. His views upon the Irish Church question were not in harmony with those essential to membership in the new Ministry. But, with these exceptions, the Administration was soon formed, as follows:

Premier and First Lord of the Treasury	Mr. Gladstone
Lord Chancellor	Lord Hatherley
Lord President of the Council	Earl de Grey and Ripon
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Kimberley
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Mr. Lowe
Home Secretary	Mr. H. A. Bruce
Foreign Secretary	Lord Clarendon
Colonial Secretary	Lord Granville
War Secretary	Mr. Cardwell
India Secretary	Duke of Argyle
President, Board of Trade	Mr. Bright
Chancellor, Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Dufferin
Postmaster-General	Lord Hartington
First Lord of the Admiralty	Mr. H. C. E. Childers
Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland	Earl Spencer
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Mr. C. Fortescue
Chief Commissioner of Works	Mr. A. H. Layard
Attorney-General	Sir R. P. Collier
Solicitor-General	Sir J. D. Coleridge

Some of these appointments were peculiar. Others were changed by circumstances during the five years which followed, the mutability of political office-holding being illustrated in this as in all other English Governments. Sir William Page Wood, who accepted the Lord Chancellorship with the title of Baron Hatherley, was an exemplary Christian politician, who had, in that connection, adorned Parliament as well as the Bench, from which he was now promoted. Lord Kimberley, at a later period, became Colonial Secretary, and voiced in the Cabinet the unfortunate policy of letting the Dependencies drift into separation. Though a disciple at that time of the Manchester school, he has since, like so many others, changed his sentiments and become loyal to the modern Imperial idea.

The Earl of Clarendon, an able statesman of the older school in Foreign affairs, and a diplomatist of wide experience, was succeeded upon his death in

1870, by Earl Granville. No man in English politics has ever had so many friends and so few personal enemies as the late Lord Granville. He was so courteous in manner and language, so pleasant and conciliatory in political intercourse and social life, that it is difficult to criticize him. But he was not a strong Foreign Secretary. To him, perhaps, were due some of the incidents in connection with international affairs which have caused Mr. Gladstone's very name to be hated by the many Conservatives who believe that boldness and brilliancy in foreign politics are synonymous with British patriotism and national honour. But his influence was considerable, and his personal popularity very great. As Liberal leader in the Lords for many years, he was as successful as any chief of a hopeless minority could hope to be. To quote the late Earl Lytton, in his clever poem and parody, "Glenaveriel":

> "The supple Glaucus, smiling, takes the field;
> Evades the point, with deprecating tone
> Of well-bred wonder noble lords should yield
> To doubts unworthy of reply; from old Whig history quotes;
> And wards off arguments with anecdotes."

Mr. Lowe's appointment was an extraordinary and, as it turned out, an unfortunate one. He had literally no knowledge of finance, and a private note to a relative at the time, expressed this fact very neatly, while it also voiced public opinion, though, no doubt, unintentionally on his part: "Dear Henry,—I am Chancellor of the Exchequer, with everything to learn. Robert Lowe." He was also fated to show an entire lack of that faculty of doing unpleasant things in a pleasant way, which is so desirable in a guardian of the public purse. He had great and admitted ability, together with a wonderful power of sarcastic speech, but this was not the position for him. And it took people an unusually long time to get over their surprise at the appointment of an eminent opponent of reform to such a high place in an avowedly reforming Ministry. Mr. Cardwell had long since won his spurs in politics, and had fought many a Peelite battle side by side with the new Premier. Mr. Bright was in his proper place at the Board of Trade. His acceptance of the extraordinary suggestion of Mr. Gladstone, that he should take the Indian office, would have introduced an element into the Government of the great Eastern Empire as disturbing and eccentric as that involved in the proposal of ten years before to make Mr. Disraeli Viceroy of India.

Lord Dufferin only remained a short time in the Government, leaving a field in which he might have attained the highest eminence for another, in which he holds first place. Had he remained in Imperial politics and stood by Mr. Gladstone, the diplomatic wisdom and powers of conciliation so often shown elsewhere might have worked wonderful changes in what is now a record of marked achievement, but of equally marked failure. The sound ability of the

Duke of Argyle, of the Marquess of Hartington, and of Earl Spencer, also contributed to the strength of the new Government; and its legal position was well maintained by the future Lord Chief Justice of England, Sir J. D. Coleridge. Of Mr. Gladstone, little need be said. He now stood at, perhaps, the most important point in his career. He had done much; yet much remained to be done. He was only fifty-nine, which, in English politics, is still young, and, though he could not know it, had between twenty and thirty years of active political life before him. And right at hand was a great legislative change to be consummated.

Whether that change was a reform, in the true sense of the word, or not, remains to be considered in connection with its passage through the House and its effect upon Ireland. Mr. Gladstone, in his "Chapter of Autobiography," published in 1868 has defended his consistency in this important step with vigour and effectiveness. But whether he was personally consistent or not; whether he was personally honest or not—and hardly any one now denies his honesty in the premises—history will judge this policy by the requirements of the case and the results of the change. Feeling at that time ran very high. The proposal to disestablish and disendow a State Church which had grown into the structure of the Constitution during centuries of development and struggle, of foreign war and civil conflict, of ecclesiastical change and religious strife, was, indeed, a bold one.

The Irish Church was woven into every part of the system of Irish administration, and the Conservatives would not, at first, believe it possible that the Gladstone Ministry could really carry out its arduous, intricate, and most difficult policy. The warmer defenders of the Church, during the ensuing discussions, dwelt with more force than Christian spirit upon the dangers of the step about to be taken, while the supporters of disestablishment were, in many cases, equally uncharitable in their tendency to gloat over the coming fall of an historic religious system.

Language was certainly not guarded. At one synod meeting the proposed measure was denounced as "offensive to Almighty God." Speaking at Cork, Lord Bandon declared the plunder of the Church to be preparatory to the plunder of the land. The Earl of Carrick announced that disestablishment would be "the greatest national sin ever committed." The Archdeacon of Ossory, at a public meeting, told his hearers, in language often since used by Irish Home Rulers, "to trust in God and keep their powder dry." Archdeacon Denison referred to the proposal as "a great national sin"; and Dr. Jebb asked Convocation to express its "utter detestation of a most ungodly, wicked, and abominable measure"; while the Government found itself not infrequently referred to as being formed of traitors, robbers, and political brigands.

When the new Parliament met in February, 1869, it was known that its first important work would be in connection with the Irish Church. While details of the Government policy could, of course, be only guessed at, a very fair idea was obtainable from the series of resolutions which Mr. Gladstone had carried during the last session of the preceding House, and by which he had forced the dissolution and compelled the ultimate defeat of the Disraeli Government. In his speech upon that occasion, he had paid every homage to a Church Establishment as such, and in an efficient condition, but had very clearly pointed out that:

"We who did our lineage high
Draw from beyond the starry sky
Are yet upon the other side,
To earth and to its dust allied."

And he had then declared that events rendered Disestablishment imperative in the case of Ireland, and that every effort must now be made "to remove what still remains of the scandals and calamities in the relations which exist between England and Ireland, and to fill up with the cement of human concord the noble fabric of the British Empire."

The Queen's speech, therefore, announced, as a matter of course, that "the ecclesiastical arrangements of Ireland" would be brought under consideration at a very early date. Her Majesty, who had not personally opened Parliament, took a great interest in the settlement of the question, and the correspondence published, by permission, in some recent Memoirs of the period shows that her intervention was both active and fruitful of good. On the very morning that the House met, Archbishop Tait received an autograph letter, from which the following are extracts:

> "The Queen must write a few lines to the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject of the Irish Church, which makes her very anxious. . . . The Queen has seen Mr. Gladstone, who shows the most conciliatory disposition. He seems to be really moderate in his views, and anxious, so far as he can properly and consistently do so, to meet the objections of those who would maintain the Irish Church. He at once assured the Queen of his readiness—indeed, his anxiety—to meet the Archbishop, and to communicate freely with him on the subject of this important question, and the Queen must express her earnest hope that the Archbishop will meet him in the same spirit. The Government can do nothing that would tend to raise a suspicion of their sincerity in proposing to disestablish the Irish Church, and to withdraw all State endowments from all religious communions in Ireland; but were these conditions accepted, all other matters connected with the question might, the Queen thinks, become the subject of discussion and negotiation. The Archbishop had best now communicate with Mr. Gladstone direct as to when he could see him."

The Premier and the prelate, of course, met shortly afterwards, and discussed the mass of collateral questions which had to be settled. The result did not at once appear, but in the subsequent battle between the Lords and the Commons the Queen, through and by the Archbishop, acted as a sort of mediator between the two parties. On March 1st, Mr. Gladstone introduced his measure with characteristic lucidity and ability. He opened with the declaration that "the system of Church Establishment in Ireland must be brought thoroughly and completely to a close," and that, while details would be treated in a liberal and even indulgent fashion, the enactment itself must be prompt and final. Disestablishment was to take place on January 1st, 1871, but from the passage of the act no further vested interests were to be created, and the property of the Church was to pass into the hands of Commissioners. The churches and burial grounds were to become the property of the disestablished Church, and the houses of residence were also to be handed over on payment of certain heavy building charges which now existed upon them. Later on in his address, he added in this connection:

> "I trust that when, instead of the fictitious and adventitious aid on which we have too long taught the Irish Establishment to lean, it should come to place its trust in its own resources, in its own great mission, in all that it can draw from the energy of its ministers and its members, and the high hopes and promises of the Gospel that it teaches, it will find that it has entered upon a new era of existence—an era bright with hope and potent for good. At any rate, I think the day has certainly come when an end is finally to be put to that union, not between the Church and religious association, but between the Establishment and the State, which was commenced under circumstances little auspicious, and has endured to be a source of unhappiness to Ireland, and of discredit and scandal to England."

The capital value of the Church's possessions in tithes, glebes, etc., he assumed to be about $80,000,000, and of this about half was to be applied in compensation of various kinds, while the balance was to be used, according to the preamble of the bill, "for the advantage of the Irish people," but not in any way for religious purposes. All grants made from private sources to the Church prior to 1660 were to be preserved intact. Finally, it was announced that the large balance which the State had to deal with was to be allocated in different proportions to the asylums and other charitable institutions of Ireland. It goes without saying that all these, and myriad smaller details, were presented to the House with marvellous clearness. It may be monotonous to add that the speech was a great one, but that is the only word that describes it. Dean Davidson, of Windsor, writing in after years, and not, of course, from a point of view friendly to the measure itself, says that "no earlier or subsequent effort will hereafter eclipse the fame of Mr. Gladstone's feat in holding the attention of the House for some three hours and a half while he unfolded by degrees what in any other hands would have been its dry and complicated details."

Bishop Fraser, of Manchester, in a letter on March 4th, following, said:

> "I don't know what your views are about the Irish Church. For myself, come what may of it, in the shape of consequences to the Church of England, I cannot resist the justice of Gladstone's measure; while the speech in which he introduced the bill the other night has quite rehabilitated him in my eyes as the statesman best qualified of all we now have to deal with the problems of the age."

The *Daily Telegraph* was more than enthusiastic in its references, and declared that Mr. Gladstone had never before, "amidst all the triumphs that mark his long course of honour and success, displayed more vigorous grasp of his subject, more luminous clearness in its development, earnestness more lofty, or eloquence more appropriate and refined, than in the memorable deliverance of last evening." And there was no doubt as to the general opinion of a speech which concluded with the declaration that "we believe, and, for my part, I am deeply convinced, that when the final consummation shall arrive, and when the words are spoken that shall give the force of law to the work embodied in this measure—the work of peace and justice—those words will be echoed upon every shore where the name of Ireland or the name of Great Britain has been heard, and the answer to them will come back in the approving verdict of civilized mankind."

Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gathorne Hardy opposed the measure with all their force, while Mr. Bright supported it in one of his greater orations. Sir Roundell Palmer assented to disestablishment, but was altogether opposed to disendowment. Mr. Lowe was characteristically sarcastic in defending the bill and attacking the Conservative leader, while Sir J. D. Coleridge won instant fame by an eloquent defence, which some one has said was so persuasive as to have almost made the Irish bishops glad of their own coming legislative extinction and disappearance from the House of Lords. Eventually, the proposals passed without change by a majority of 114 on the third reading. Then came the inevitable difficulty in the Upper House. The Irish bishops, who had in the meantime been fighting the measure with all their influence and ability, now promised to continue their struggle to some purpose. Archbishop Trench, of Dublin, was especially enthusiastic and denunciatory in his opposition, and to him Bishop Wilberforce, in the course of a lengthy correspondence, wrote a soothing and rather remarkable letter. After attacking Mr. Disraeli in a distinctly personal manner—for, with all his goodness and abilities, the Bishop was a strong partisan—he went on to defend his own leader in a policy which, however, he naturally and intensely disliked:

> "You have in Gladstone a man of the highest and noblest principle, who has shown unmistakably that he is ready to sacrifice every personal aim for what he has set before himself as a high object. He is supported, not by a minority conscious of being a minority, but by a great and confident majority. Has there ever yet been any measure,

however opposed, which the English people have been unable, for its 'difficulty,' to carry through when they have determined to do so? . . . They have resolved to carry your disestablishment, and they know that they can and will carry it. Now, what is gained by opposing and chafing such a body?"

And then he proceeded to urge that the principle of disestablishment be accepted and a compromise upon details arranged. But the Archbishop and his friends felt too keenly in the matter to accept even obviously good advice, and the bill, therefore, went up to meet an apparently uncompromising and unfavourable reception. No one knew exactly what the ultimate result would be, but all who had the interests of the Constitution at heart dreaded a serious conflict between the Lords and so large and national a majority in the Commons. There was in this case no doubt as to the sentiment of the country. But no consideration of expediency would restrain men of such strong principles in such a connection, as were Lord Derby, the majority of the bishops, and many of the Tory peers. Fiery debates followed, in which Bishop Magee, of Peterborough, made the walls of the gorgeous chamber ring with his famous denunciations of the bill, and the Earl of Derby, now worn by political strife and wasted by disease, made what was destined to be the last public utterance of a great career. "I am an old man," said he, "past the allotted span of threescore and ten; and if it be for the last time that I have the honour of addressing your lordships, I declare that it will be to my dying day a satisfaction that I have been able to lift up my voice against a measure, the political impolicy of which is equalled by its moral iniquity."

Meantime, every effort was being made to effect a compromise. Archbishop Tait, by command of the Queen, and by consent of many of the leaders, was marvellously energetic in trying to get the Lords to make only moderate and practicable amendments. He had won the fight over the second reading, and instead of instant rejection, as Lord Derby demanded, the measure had been held over for amendment. Amongst the Tory leaders, by the way, who opposed rejection were Lord Salisbury, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Lytton (Sir E. B. Lytton of other days). While matters had been still pending, the Queen had written the Archbishop again, deploring the fact of the crisis and the original views of Mr. Gladstone upon the question, but urging that the ascertained will of the people ought not to be wilfully and uselessly opposed. No doubt this affected the decision as to non-rejection.

But when the amendments finally reached the Commons, they were found to completely change, and in some respects emasculate, the bill. Mr. Gladstone absolutely refused to yield, and, in speaking of the proposed alterations and the House of Lords, said of the latter that, "from the great eminence on which they sit, they can no more discuss the minute particulars of our transactions than can a man in a balloon." The Radicals were, of course, delighted by this, and back went the bill in its original form. On July 20th the Peers met, and, after a hot debate, decided by a majority of 74 to adhere to the first and most important of their amendments. This precipitated the crisis which had been feared, and in anticipation of which the Archbishop of Canterbury had been for several days in almost hourly communication with the Queen, with Lord Cairns, the Conservative leader in the Lords, and with Mr. Gladstone. As usual, however, in such contingencies, a compromise was now effected by both sides yielding something, and on the 26th of the month the Irish Church Bill received the Royal assent. Its passage had been a really great legislative achievement, and this aside from all political considerations. The bill had been carried through its various stages in the face of a compact and powerful Opposition, and in the brief space of five stormy months. The Premier's forceful determination was admitted on all sides, and his signal success with this important measure now made him the uncontrolled chief of his party and the dominant force in progressive Liberalism. By this action, also, Mr. Gladstone had practically controverted his famous dictum of now distant days, that the State had a conscience, and that in obedience to this collective conscience of the community some particular faith should be supported and enforced by the law of the State. While to some extent retaining his theory, he had now limited its application to States which possessed some particular division of the Protestant religion in dominant and effective operation. Upon this basis he could still support the Church of England in England, although helping to depose from its national position the Church of England in Ireland.

Meanwhile, personal denunciation of Mr. Gladstone was very common in certain ecclesiastical and political circles, and was not in itself unreasonable. Many felt regarding the Irish Church as he had himself felt in 1838. And they were, no doubt, honestly incapable of appreciating the sensitive conscience, changing convictions, and continued mental development of a man so remarkable in many ways, but in none more than this. Inconsistency is a very peculiar word, and a still more peculiar thing. If Mr. Gladstone was inconsistent in 1869, because of his work on Church and State written three decades before, so also was Mr. Disraeli, who had, in 1844, spoken of the evils of Ireland as including "a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, and an alien Church." But the fact of the matter is that neither was to blame for changes in opinion which had come about as the natural result of the restless sea of change which rolls around and over every modern statesman of experience or achievement.

To defend Gladstone or excuse Disraeli for inconsistent views held thirty or forty years before any given date is, therefore, both useless and unnecessary. To say, as did one critic at this time, that Mr. Gladstone "has lived to exhaust the capacity of change, till beside him instability itself looks constant," is to simply claim that he has embodied the spirit of the passing century. The real matter for consideration in such cases as this is the object aimed at and the method of achievement. As the Liberal leader had already said in his "Chapter of Autobiography" (September 22nd, 1868), "Changes which are sudden and precipitate—changes accompanied with a light and contemptuous repudiation of the former self—changes which are systematically timed and tuned to the interest of personal advancement—changes which are hooded, slurred over, or denied—for these changes, and such as these, I have not one word to say."

He went on to claim that in his book upon the union of Church and State, he had used none of the stock arguments current in the discussions of thirty years afterwards. He had not said that it should be maintained in order to avert a disturbance of property, or to guard against a forced and ultimate repeal of the union between England and Ireland. He had not urged that it should be maintained for the spiritual benefit of a small minority, or at the expense of establishing religious equality by giving sops to other denominations and churches. But however strong or weak this argument may be, Mr. Gladstone appears on more real ground when he points out that the basis of his whole contention in this early work—exclusive and active support to an established religion—was a theory which no party or section of a party was prepared to act upon in the future. "I found myself the last man on a sinking ship." What had been and was, the majority were more than willing to maintain, but further public endowments or grants of money either to Established Churches, or to Church schools, as such, were clearly seen to be impossible.

Hence, he gradually and naturally drifted away from his old-time theory. This is shown, though he does not refer to it in his "Defence," by an extract from a letter to Bishop (then Dean) Wilberforce on August 16th, 1845:

> "As you say, title by descent will not uphold her, and efficiency would be her best argument. But I am sorry to express my apprehension that the Irish Church is not, in a large sense, efficient; the working results of the last three years have disappointed me."

To return to the autobiography. The Church in Ireland, he points out, always had his sincere good-will, and he did not leap at once to the conclusion that at some definite period she must cease to exist as an Establishment. On the contrary, "it was my duty to exhaust every chance on behalf of the Irish Church." And then he recapitulates all the favouring influences possessed by that Church, the power for good she ought to have attained, the poverty of the real result. "She has had ample endowments; an almost unbroken freedom from the internal controversies which have chastened (though in chastening, I believe, improved) the Church of England. She has had all the moral support that could be given her by the people of this country. Her rival, the Church of Rome, has seen its people borne down to the ground by famine; and then thinned from year to year in hundreds of thousands by the resistless force of emigration. And, last and most of all, in the midst of that awful visitation of 1847-8 her Protestant clergy came to the Roman Catholic people clad in the garb of angels of light; for besides their own bounty, they became the grand almoners of the British nation." Yet, in spite of all these advantages, the census of 1861 showed that hardly any impression had been made upon the relative numbers of the Anglicans and the Romanists. Hence, to his mind, the practical failure of the Irish Establishment.

Mr. Gladstone then proceeds in this remarkable little bit of self-history to quote various incidents and remarks which indicate the restlessness of his mind upon the question during many years, and his gradual approach towards decisive conviction and action. And he concludes by claiming that it is "by a practical, rather than a theoretic, test that our establishments of religion should be tried." In other words, like every human institution, they must be judged by their works. To this belief he had apparently come through a lengthy course of self-training, and by the long road which reaches from an Establishment under Divine sanction, if not command, to an Establishment which must be dealt with according to its spiritual performance and popular progress.

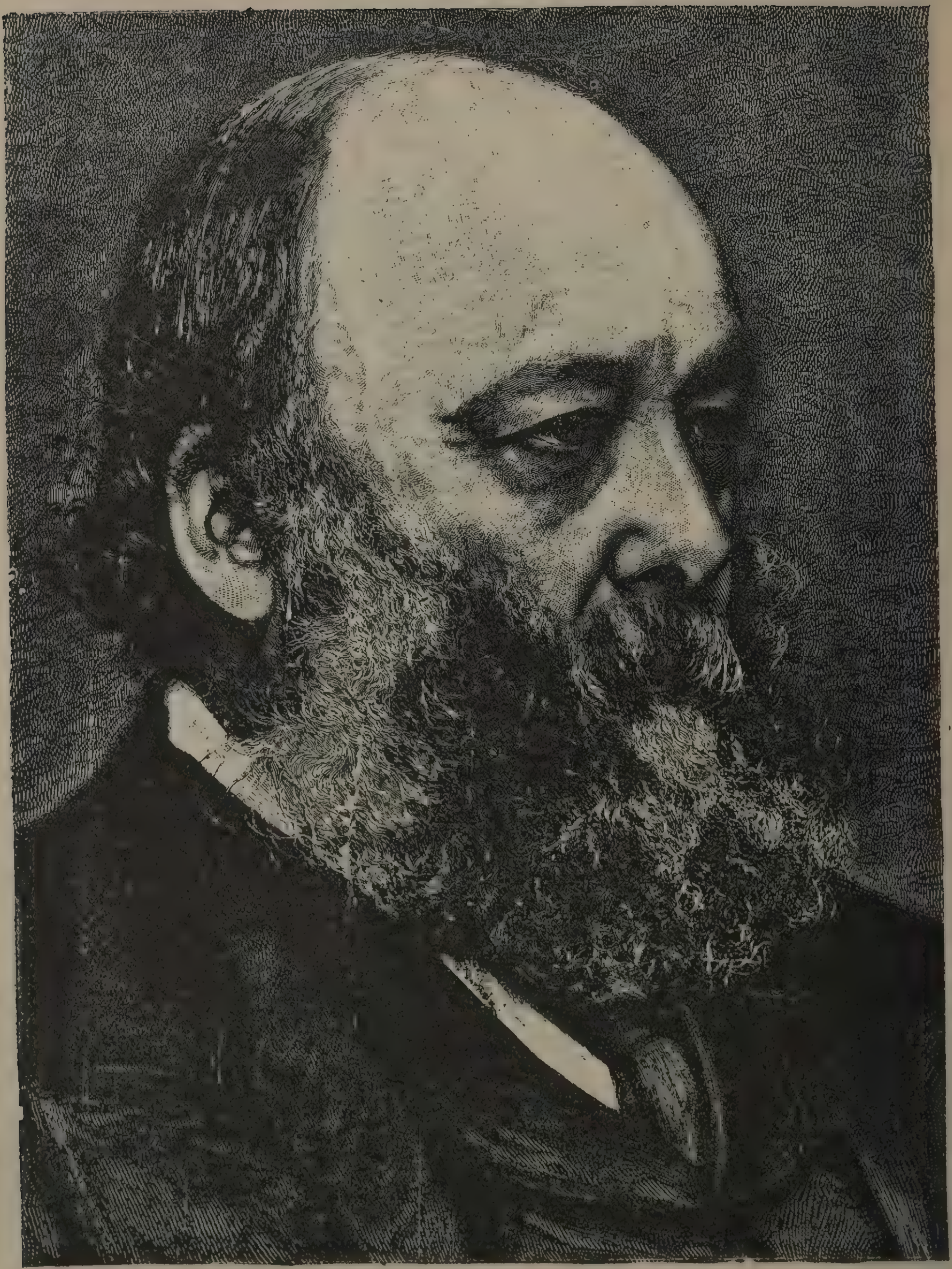
Such was Mr. Gladstone's own defence of his change of opinion. There may have been other and unconscious motives behind the general consciousness which he felt that the Church had not proved itself worthy of its position, and had become the centre of seething national discontent. Mr. Froude claims, in his "Life of Lord Beaconsfield"—a volume most unfavourable to the Tory leader—that Mr. Gladstone's High Church and Tractarian tendencies prejudiced him in the matter. The Irish Church is declared by the historian to have been Evangelical to the heart—actively, vigorously, healthily Evangelical. "We have no Tractarians here," said the Bishop of Cashel to me, "we have the real thing, and know too much about it." Curiously enough, in this connection, Bishop Wilberforce, writing to Sir Charles Anderson on March 25th, 1868, referred to the "bad business," as he called it, and then, speaking of Mr. Gladstone, said: "I have no doubt that his hatred to the *low* tone of the Irish branch has a good deal to do with it."

However, speculation in such a direction would open up too vast a field for consideration here. One thing is certain. Mr. Gladstone was thoroughly in earnest, and thoroughly convinced of the righteousness of his cause and of the necessity for his action. As to its general benefit, Englishmen will always be divided in opinion. Irish Catholics and English Liberals are united, of course, in admiration of the policy, but the majority of those who love the English Establishment, and nearly all Conservatives, still feel that it was a dangerous precedent and a weakening of British influence in Ireland. Few, however, will be found to agree with Archbishop Trench, of Dublin, who, in 1868, delivered an episcopal charge in which he pictured the then prospective legislation as likely to turn the entire country Roman Catholic, and make it necessary for some new Cromwell to stand "amid the smoking ruins of the civilization and prosperity of Ireland."

But waiving all speculative and minor considerations, the Irish Church policy of Mr. Gladstone was memorable in its inception, its execution, and its results. It inaugurated a new period in Ireland, and a new method of dealing with the Irish people. For good or ill, it made an Irish party possible, and marked the faint beginnings of Home Rule as a great national issue.

ARCHIBALD PHILIP PRIMROSE, 5TH EARL OF ROSEBERY,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1894-95.



ROBERT CECIL, 3RD MARQUESS OF SALISBURY,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1885-86, 1887-92, 1895.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LIBERAL PARTY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

THE conduct of foreign affairs has never exhibited the Liberal party in its best light. The leaders of that historic organization, whether they called themselves Whig, or Liberal, or Radical, have, as a rule, shown much more interest and devotion to home matters and growth than to external expansion and development. Hence, of course, their domestic policy has been the most important, and their home legislation the most striking in work and result. And the Tory or Conservative leaders, from the days of Pitt, have sedulously cultivated the belief that their opponents are unmindful of English interests abroad, and careless regarding British influence or prestige. For this claim there has at times been some ground; at others no excuse whatever.

Lord Rosebery tells us in his monograph upon Pitt that the letters of Charles James Fox show a lamentable lack of patriotism. At a time in the struggle with Napoleon, when every Englishman should have been intent upon strengthening the hands of his Government, Fox was writing of one of the minor expeditions to France that "I believe, as well as hope, it has not the smallest chance of success." And a little later, in 1801, he wrote: "The triumph of the French Government over the English does, in fact, afford me a degree of pleasure which it is very difficult to disguise." It was largely this indifference to British success and external power—or the reputation for it—which kept the Whigs out of office for more than a quarter of a century after that period, and laid the foundation for the belief which still exists in many quarters. Lord Palmerston's sway at the Foreign Office broke through these traditions of Whig weakness for a time, but the interval of Crimean struggle, and the somewhat inept administration of foreign affairs by Lord John Russell, revived them very strongly. Then came a recurrence of Lord Palmerston's strong ascendency, and a period of cautious management under Lord Clarendon, with brief intervals of unimportant Conservative control.

But it was left to Mr. Gladstone's first and greatest administration to encounter a condition of affairs which, difficult in themselves, became the cause of intense controversy and of considerable unpopularity to the party and its leader. The three chief questions which Lord Granville had to deal with when he succeeded Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office, upon the latter's death in 1870, were the complications arising from the Franco-Prussian war; the Washington Treaty and its ensuing arbitration; and the action of Russia regarding the neutralization of the Black Sea. In the first case, the British Government seems to have acted in the best interests of the country. In the second, it appears to have faced a difficult problem and a strained situation without a proper knowledge or appreciation of American diplomacy, and with less care for Canadian interests than was desirable. In the third case, it seems to have made the best of an unpleasant and inherited difficulty.

The war between France and Prussia, in 1870, stirred Europe to its heart. It had been imminent for some time. The failure of Louis Napoleon in Mexico, his evacuation at the command of the United States, and the leaving of Maximilian to his unfortunate fate, had made an impression upon the French people which rendered some attempt at retrieval necessary; and the one ever-popular cry in France was to be led against Prussia. Wrapped in a false security, and surrounded by a military system which was literally a whited sepulchre—fair and fine without, false and frail within—the Emperor rushed recklessly into war. His first excuse for raising trouble was the nomination of a German prince to the vacant throne of Spain. He protested and threatened, and England intervened in the interest of peace. Mr. Gladstone declared in the House on July 15th, 1870, that "I am bound to say neither of the two States showed the slighest disposition to impatience at the representations of Great Britain." Two weeks later, he was able to say that "We thought, for the sake of peace, the nomination of the Prince of Hohenzollern should be withdrawn. For that purpose the British Government interfered, and Earl Granville, aided doubtless by similar efforts from other quarters, was successful in procuring that withdrawal."

Then followed the utterly untenable demand by France that Prussia should undertake not to make any future nomination to the Spanish throne; the alleged insults to M. Benedetti at Ems; the renewed efforts at mediation by England; and the final declaration of war on the part of France. Immediately after this latter event, Mr. Gladstone wrote a friend: "It is not for me to distribute praise or blame, but I think the war, as a whole, and the state of things out of which it has grown, deserve a severer condemnation than any which the nineteenth century has exhibited since the peace of 1815." English sympathies were at first with Prussia, but Sedan, and Metz, and the siege of Paris, the tremendous sweep of German success, and the advantage taken of a moment of power to wrest territory and exact enormous indemnities from a stricken people, soon turned the tide of public opinion.

And it is the fate of neutrality at such a time to command appreciation from neither side. When France appeared as the aggressor and a sort of national freebooter, Prussian sympathizers were angry with the Government for its neutral position. When France lay bleeding at the feet of its conqueror, French sympathizers were equally indignant at the apparent supineness of their Ministry. But, upon the whole, Lord Granville seems to have conducted the necessary and difficult correspondence with tact and courtesy, and to have carried England successfully through a very trying time. With regard to the neutrality of Belgium, Mr. Gladstone and his Government took reasonably strong and successful ground. The publication of what has been called the Benedetti treaty by Count Bismarck, in 1870, showed that a secret arrangement had been attempted some time before by France for the acquisition of Belgium, and this in the teeth of the existing guarantees of its neutrality in an agreement signed thirty years before by England, France, and Prussia.

Such action almost involved England in the struggle. The Ministry at once asked and obtained from Parliament a grant of ten million dollars and an addition to the active forces of twenty thousand men. But, fortunately, they were not needed. Mr. Gladstone, during a speech in the House, stated that on the 30th of July the Government made a proposal to France and Prussia, in identical terms, "that if the armies of either one of the belligerents should, in the course of the operations of the war, violate the neutrality of Belgium, as secured by the terms of the treaty of 1839, this country should co-operate with the other belligerent in defence of that neutrality by arms. It was signified in the document so transmitted that Britain would not by that engagement, or by acting upon that engagement in case of need, be bound to take part in the general operations of the war." Ten days after the above date this proposal was accepted by France and Prussia, and England was established in her famous position of "armed neutrality." And reasonable public opinion has since decided that this policy was, upon the whole, wise.

In the troubles with the American Republic, Mr. Gladstone and his Ministry inherited difficulties which the passing years seemed to intensify. They had been made worse by the political exigencies of the United States, which compelled its Senate to reject the treaty negotiated by Reverdy Johnson, and which caused President Grant to play to the gallery by threats against England, and by admitted subserviency to the influence of Charles Sumner as chairman of the powerful Committee on Foreign Affairs. So also with the unfortunate American slowness of action in connection with the Fenian raids into Canada. On the other hand, there was a failure to understand how great and real was the soreness in the Republic over England's lack of sympathy with the Northern cause in their great struggle. And the British Government seemed inclined to think that a settlement could be effected by payment of a few individual claims for damages, at a time when the United States was, in reality, eager for a national recompense for what they deemed a national wrong.

This difficulty was further complicated by English ignorance of Canada's position, and of the desire felt in the United States to promote annexation sentiment in the Dominion and to hasten the day of its anticipated union with the great Republic.

The United States had very just and very heavy claims. There was no need for prolonged dispute over that fact, and eventually both parties in England became committed to arbitration as a means of settlement. The story is an old and familiar one. The "Alabama" was built in a British dockyard during the American civil war; she was manned by an English crew; and some of her gunners belonged to the English Naval Reserve, and were in receipt of English pay. It had been an open secret that she was to go upon Confederate service; the British authorities were warned of the result, and the order for her detention was finally issued. But it was then too late, and the cruiser had sailed out of port under the British flag, to work havoc for two long years in the Northern navy and with Northern commerce, and to capture some seventy Northern vessels. Other Southern cruisers had a similar origin, though the bulk of the mischief was done by the "Alabama."

After prolonged efforts at settlement, and the development of much ill-feeling on both sides, any open rupture was averted by the appointment early in 1871 of a High Joint Commission to meet at Washington. The British Commissioners were Lord de Grey and Ripon (afterwards Marquess of Ripon), Sir Stafford Northcote, Professor Bernard, Sir Edward Thornton, and Sir John A. Macdonald, Premier of Canada. Mr. Hamilton Fish, United States Secretary of State, was the leading American Commissioner. Ultimately, the Treaty of Washington was signed, referring the amount of the Alabama and similar claims to an arbitration tribunal, which was to meet later on; refusing to admit Canadian claims arising out of the Fenian raids, or certain claims by British subjects domiciled in the South; referring the San Juan boundary question to the Emperor of Germany, who decided in favour of the United States; admitting American vessels to the free navigation of the St. Lawrence; and referring Canadian fisheries' claims to another arbitration.

The treaty began with the formal and fully justified announcement that "Her Britannic Majesty has authorized her High Commissioners and Plenipotentiaries to express, in a friendly spirit, the regret felt by Her Majesty's Government for the escape, under whatever circumstances, of the 'Alabama' and other vessels from British ports, and for the depredations committed by those vessels." But there is now no doubt that the arrangement went further in the direction of general submission to American demands than was desirable from a British standpoint. Private correspondence recently published in the Memoirs of Sir John Macdonald indicate clearly that the main object of the English Commissioners was peace, and a settlement of the vexed question, even at some expense to Canadian interests or damage to British expectations.

Shortly after the signatures had been affixed to the treaty, the United States, with remarkable suddenness, presented what were called the "indirect claims," for consideration. When examined, they were found to include a demand for almost limitless damages. Losses from transfer of trade to English vessels, from increased rates of insurance, and from an infinite number of other matters connected with the extension and duration of the war, were involved. Mr. Justin McCarthy declares that "the indirect claims were not only absurd, but even monstrous, and the English Government had not for one moment the slightest idea of admitting them as part of the case to be laid before the arbitrators at Geneva. Even men like Mr. Bright, who had been devoted friends of the North during the war, protested against this insufferable claim. It was at last withdrawn."

Since that time Mr. John Russell Young has told us of President Grant's admission to him that it had never been intended to press the indirect claims. But it was a mistake to have ever presented them. The treaty was nearly wrecked before they were withdrawn, and the debates in the British Parliament became very warm. During the discussions early in February, 1872, Mr. Disraeli declared that the Government should speak out clearly and frankly upon the question. The treaty appeared to him to exclude all indirect claims, and this should be insisted upon. Mr. Gladstone warmly defended the negotiations, the treaty, and the Ministry. He stated that the Government, and not the Commissioners, were absolutely responsible for the treaty, and admitted that large concessions had been made to the Republic. But he thought they were fully justified by the circumstances. Referring to the new complication, he declared that "it amounted almost to an interpretation of insanity to suppose that any negotiators could intend to admit, in a peaceful negotiation, claims of such an unmeasured character. . . . Claims transcending every limit hitherto known or heard of—claims which not even the last extremities of war and the lowest depths of misfortune would force a people with a spark of spirit, with the hundredth part of the traditions of the people of this country, to submit to at the point of death."

He added that under no circumstances would the Government allow themselves to swerve from their sacred and paramount duty to the country. As might have been expected, such forcible language had an immediate result. In May a supplementary treaty was drawn up, in which both nations agreed to in future abstain from claims for indirect losses. But the United States wanted certain modifications, and this caused renewed discussion, both diplomatic and popular. Finally, the claims were referred to the Geneva tribunal, which met from June to September, 1872. It promptly threw out all indirect claims, but, eventually, awarded the United States damages amounting to $15,500,000 in gold. This sum was immediately paid over, and several years later a commission at Halifax awarded Canada five and a half millions compensation for ten years' American use of its Atlantic fisheries. With this event, and a British guarantee given to an Intercolonial Railway loan in Canada in return for the withdrawal of the Fenian raid claims, a great international question was peaceably settled.

It had not been a pleasant or easy problem to solve, and the result was far from popular. Canada accepted it from patriotic principles, and in order to avert war. But in England it made the people feel very sore and angry, and Mr. McCarthy states, in his "History of Our Own Times," that "it is certain Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues suffered in public esteem by the mere fact of their having accepted the arbitration, which went so signally against England. They were somewhat in the position of a Government who have to submit to vigorous and humiliating terms of peace."

There is, however, no doubt that the policy of accepting the arbitration and the award was just and honourable. Where the dissatisfaction properly arose was in the matters which were submitted, or not submitted, to arbitration. Had the British Commissioners at Washington been more stiff-backed, they would have probably obtained a different arrangement. But Mr. Gladstone very rightly felt that the United States was the injured country, that reparation was really due, and that war was so dreadful a thing as to be worth some sacrifice to avert. It was, however, unfortunate that all the sacrifice should be on one side, though certainly the American Commissioners are not to be blamed for getting whatever was possible out of the negotiations.

Mr. Gladstone's motives were of the highest and best. He anticipated and hoped to advance the time

> "When love unites, wide space divides in vain,
> And hands may clasp across the spreading main."

If he had really succeeded in warming the hearts of the American people towards England; if his career had helped to remove the hostile dust of Revolutionary days, which still blinds so many patriotic and otherwise clear-sighted citizens of the great Republic; if the prejudice against British institutions and British countries, such as Canada, had been largely alleviated or abolished; Mr. Gladstone's policy would have been great and successful, even though immediate interests might have been disregarded and unpopularity gained. But though his personality and views have helped towards this end, there is still far more to be done than has yet been achieved, before England and the States can be the sincere friends they ought to be. War is now almost out of the question, but real friendship between the masses of the people must still be worked for. One thing, however, is certain. Mr. Gladstone, for the last twenty years of his political life, has been, throughout the United States, the greatest and most representative and popular of all British statesmen. Speaking in the House of Commons on June 16th, 1880, with reference to the general question of arbitration, he declared in this connection that:

> "The dispositions which led us to become parties to the arbitration on the Alabama case are still with us the same as ever; we are not discouraged; we are not damped in the exercise of these feelings by the fact that we were amerced, and severely amerced, by the sentence of the international tribunal; and, although we may think the sentence was harsh in its extent, and unjust in its basis, we regard the fine imposed on this country as dust in the balance compared with the moral value of the example set when these two great nations of England and America, which are among the most fiery and the most jealous in the world with regard to anything that touches national honour, went in peace and concord before a judicial tribunal to dispose of their painful differences, rather than resort to the arbitrament of the sword."

The Black Sea neutralization clause of the Treaty of Paris was another legacy of trouble to the Gladstone Government. Ever since the Crimean war had been concluded by that treaty, Russia had been hampered in its shipping operations, humiliated in its national aspirations, and limited in its naval and military arrangements. Through that clause in the treaty, the Black Sea was neutralized, and its waters were opened to the merchant ships of all nations. But no ships of war were allowed within its bounds, and no arsenals upon its banks. It was clear, and it must have been so from the first, that whenever Russia had the power, or saw an opportune moment, she would try to get out of this compulsory and most unpleasant restriction. And, with a country so conspicuous for peculiar and shifty diplomacy, that time came as soon as she saw her former enemies in the throes of war, or in a position of isolated inaction.

A few weeks before the meeting of Parliament in February, 1871, England and the other European powers were startled by the receipt of a formal communication from Prince Gortschakoff to the effect that the Emperor of Russia would not any longer consider himself bound by the Treaty of Paris, so far as the Black Sea was concerned; that he was quite willing to allow the Sultan of Turkey the same rights therein that he assumed himself; that he did not wish to revive the general Eastern question, and was quite ready to renew, or re-arrange, the other stipulations of the treaty. This was, of course, repudiation pure and simple; and, had Europe been free to act, would not for one moment have been permitted. But France and Germany were hardly likely to surrender their death-grip in order to turn upon Russia; while Austria naturally would not interfere actively, when she had already refused, in 1854, to join the united forces of England, France, Turkey, and Sardinia.

For England, therefore, to go to war single-handed in defence of a treaty clause in which all Europe was interested, but for the moment unable to act, would have been folly. Lord Granville did the best he could. He protested, and in a prolonged diplomatic correspondence tried to uphold what the speech from the throne in this year described as "the sanctity of treaties," and to remove "misapprehensions as to the binding character of their obligations." Had the Russian Emperor cared for argument, the British Foreign Secretary's reasons were logical and strong to a demonstration. But it was a period of doubtful national diplomacy and shady national transactions. The negotiations between Count Bismarck and M. Benedetti regarding Belgium had been cynical and disgraceful in the extreme. The attitude of France after the Spanish throne settlement was aggressive and unscrupulous to a degree. The subsequent seizure of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany does not admit of any very strong defence, except upon the principle that might makes right. The capture of Rome by the King of Italy's troops after the French occupation had ceased could only be excused on the ground that the end justifies the means. And Charles Sumner had only recently suggested to President Grant that "the first condition of peace with England should be the withdrawal of her flag from the North American continent," and the consequent acquisition of Canada by the Republic.

Amid this general tendency to take something from somebody else, it can hardly be wondered that the Russian Emperor should have joined in the diversion by repudiating an undoubtedly humiliating treaty. He succeeded, of course, in his aim, but it had to be done under the graceful international fiction that Europe had been consulted, and had been charmed to give its consent. Lord Granville, assisted by Count Bismarck, called a Conference in London, which met on January 17th, 1871, to consider the wishes of Russia "without any foregone conclusion." And after passing a resolution that it was an essential principle of the law of nations that no State could release itself from the engagements of a treaty without the consent of the other contracting powers, the Conference proceeded to abrogate the Black Sea clause of the Treaty of Paris. Then the members adjourned.

It was an unfortunate position for the British Government to be in. Here was a principal part of the treaty, which had been won at such a terrible expense of life and money, torn to shreds, and thrown to the winds of heaven. Mr. Gladstone and his Ministry could do nothing. To have gone to war over the matter would have been madness, and yet the situation naturally added another to the growing list of causes which were making the Government unpopular. There was really nothing better to do, but a Government which had to do it necessarily aroused antagonism and dislike in many directions, and deserved commiseration in others. Mr. Gladstone was himself entirely consistent in the course taken. During the debates in Parliament after the Crimean war, and while the terms of peace were being considered, he had freely attacked the Palmerston Government for trying to obtain too much from Russia, and for putting that Empire in a position from which it would inevitably try at some future time to escape.

He expressed the fear then that this neutralization of the Black Sea was more than could be permanently enforced. Speaking in the Commons early in 1871, he drew attention to this fact. "In the year 1856, I declared my confident conviction that it was impossible to maintain the neutralization. I do not speak from direct communication with Lord Clarendon; but I have been told since his death that he never attached value to that neutralization. Again, I do not speak from direct communication, but I have been told that Lord Palmerston always looked upon it as an arrangement which might be maintained and held together for a limited number of years, but which from its character it was impossible to maintain as a permanent condition for a great settlement of Europe." The accuracy of these opinions from Lord Clarendon and Lord Palmerston were denied by Mr. Disraeli, and there is no doubt that the latter would have continued the war in 1855, rather than give up this particular clause. But it does not follow that he might not also have expected a future effort at amendment or abrogation. Indeed, common sense indicates this as a natural thought.

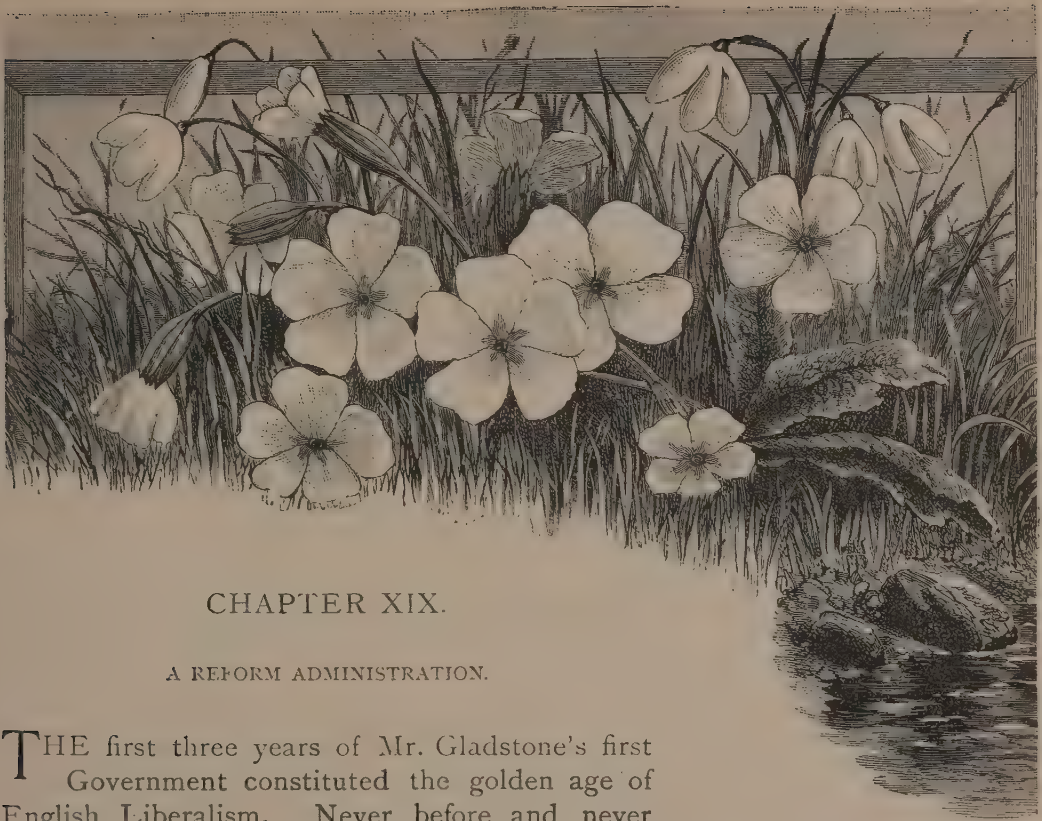
Such were the leading questions of foreign policy during Mr. Gladstone's first administration. They were not of a kind to strengthen his Government, and they were of a nature which required peculiar adaptation to the sterner exigencies of international rivalry. In this particular point Mr. Gladstone never excelled, and he would be the first to admit the fact. He loved peace too well to be a great militant influence in times of war and strife. And it is certain that Lord Granville did not possess the qualities which his chief lacked, and which in Lord Palmerston had been so prominent during other days, and in Lord Rosebery were destined to be marked at a future time. Hence it was that the good intentions of the Government, and its absolutely necessary policy in at least two of these critical events, produced nothing but discontent at home and some discredit abroad. When the elections came on in January, 1874, Mr. Disraeli denounced the Government without stint or limit for its foreign policy, and went all over the globe in search of instances. As to one of his speeches, Mr. Gladstone replied with considerable humour. After stating that his opponent had carried them to the distant Straits of Malacca, and claimed that the Government had committed most astonishing acts of ignorance or folly in many other parts of the world, he went on to quote the following lines:

"The farmers of Aylesbury gathered to dine,
And they ate their prime beef, and they drank their old wine.
With the wine there was beer, with the beer there was bacca.
The liquors went round, and the banquet was crowned
With some thundering news from the Straits of Malacca."

Some years later—August, 1878—in an elaborate and singularly able article in the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Gladstone summed up his views of Foreign policy:

> "England, which has grown so great, may easily become little: through the effeminate selfishness of luxurious living; through neglecting realities at home, to amuse herself everywhere else in stalking phantoms; through putting again on her resources a strain like that of the great French war, which brought her people to misery, and her throne to peril; through that denial of equal rights to others which taught us so severe a lesson at the epoch of the Armed Neutrality. But she will never lose by the modesty in thought and language which most of all beseems the greatest of mankind; never by forwardness to allow, and to assert, the equal rights of all states and nations; never by the refusal to be made the tool of foreign cunning, for ends alien to her principles and feelings; never by keeping her engagements in due relation to her means, or by husbanding those means for the day of need, and for the noble duty of defending, as occasion offers, the cause of public right, and of rational freedom, over the broad expanse of Christendom."

This is a characteristic and a Christian-like summary of policy. Unfortunately, however, modern diplomacy is so very human in its conception, and so very selfish in its practice, that the attempted application by any one nation of lofty and cosmopolitan principles is all too apt to end in failure, if not in disaster. One more quotation, from a speech at Greenwich, November 27th, 1879, will give a glimpse of the place which Mr. Gladstone would like external relations to hold in the national polity: "Pericles, the great Athenian statesman, said, with regard to women, that their great merit was to be never heard of. What Pericles said of women, I am very much disposed to say of foreign affairs. Their great merit would be to be never heard of." This remark illustrates very clearly his life-long view that foreign policy should be quiet, peaceable, non-aggressive, and subordinate, while domestic policy ought to be the central theme of public discussion, the great subject of public effort.



CHAPTER XIX.

A REFORM ADMINISTRATION.

THE first three years of Mr. Gladstone's first Government constituted the golden age of English Liberalism. Never before and never since was there such a rushing tide of political energy, such a constant succession of legislative reforms. The strong and compact majority in the House, the definite mandate of an aroused electorate, the intense conviction of an enthusiastic leader, seemed to have united the party in an extraordinary effort to grapple with a whole series of great questions. Each of these problems was apparently enough for a single administration to deal with successfully. Yet in the first year of this Government the Irish Church had been disestablished, and the Irish land tenure system reformed. Then came the abolition of Purchase in the army, the introduction of the Ballot system, and the effort to establish a national scheme of education.

With the completion of his Irish Disestablishment policy, Mr. Gladstone reached one of the highest points of success in his long career. For the moment his enemies were his footstool. No shadow of foreign complications as yet rested upon his popularity. Other great, and more generally admitted, reforms were about to be consummated, and, flushed with victory, full of hope and confidence, strong in health and mental power, he stood as the greatest Liberal leader of the century. For a brief period, indeed, he had broken down. But it was only a temporary and natural reaction from the frightful physical strain of forcing so vital and complicated a measure through the Houses of Parliament. He quickly recovered, and during the rest of the session following the Irish Church legislation a lot of minor, but none the less important, reforms were carried. The bankruptcy question was at length settled in a fairly satisfactory manner. The abolition of imprisonment for debt, and the establishment of imprisonment for fraud, was arranged after a struggle which had lasted many years. A measure dealing with cattle diseases, and one which totally repealed the fire insurance duties, were also enacted.

During the next session, which began on February 10th, 1870, greater questions were taken up. The intense activity of the new Liberalism had to be maintained. And the first great item on the list was legislation to improve the laws relating to the occupation and acquisition of land in Ireland. It was duly announced in the speech from the throne, and, five days later, Mr. Gladstone introduced his first Irish Land Bill. An immense crowd was present in the galleries, and wherever a foothold could be secured, to hear the gifted orator make his proposals for the settlement of a question which all sides now believed to require consideration and treatment. He commenced by declaring that the course of legislation during the past fifty years had been detrimental to the tenants or occupiers, though intended, upon the whole, to be the reverse. The Encumbered Estates' Act, for instance, by not protecting the improvements of the tenant, had really operated as a confiscation of property. And he thought it a matter of serious doubt whether the occupier was now in any better condition than he had been before the repeal of the Penal Laws.

The great difficulty to be faced was insecurity of tenure, which interfered with the tenant's industry, limited his desire for improvement in position and ability to better himself, while making him dependent to a greater or lesser extent upon his landlord. This Mr. Gladstone wished to remedy. At the same time he denounced perpetuity of tenure as converting landlords into mere recipients of rent-charge, separating them from their beneficial responsibilities, and relieving them of practically all public duties. He divided his measure into two parts. Under the first, and dealing with the acquisition of land, it was proposed to increase the limited power of owners as to sale and lease, while assistance would be given by Treasury loans to tenants desiring to purchase the cultivated lands they then occupied. Provision would also be made for loans to help in the reclamation and purchase of waste lands, and for the assistance of landlords who wished to compensate tenants in a voluntary surrender of their holdings.

Under the second part of the bill, he proposed to establish a special Land Court—from which there would be an appeal to the Judges of Assize—and to give the Ulster traditionary customs, as to the holding of land, the force of law. Under the latter system, the tenant had a sort of admitted, though not legal, right or partnership in the land he occupied; could not be evicted so long as he paid his rent; and was entitled to sell the good-will of his farm for whatever it would bring. And this tenant right—which Lord Palmerston had once termed "landlord's wrong"—was made applicable, by this bill, all over Ireland, as well as in Ulster. In a word, the measure endeavoured to secure the tenant on his land so long as he paid his rent, and to give him a substantial interest in the soil by securing him the value of his improvements. Mr. Gladstone concluded his speech in the following words:

> "If I am asked what I hope to effect by this bill, I certainly hope we shall effect a great change in Ireland; but I hope, also, and confidently believe, that this change will be effected by gentle means. Every line of the measure has been studied with the keenest desire that it shall import as little as possible of shock or violent alteration into any single arrangement now existing between tenant and landlord in Ireland. There is, no doubt, much to be undone; there is, no doubt, much to be improved; but what we desire is that the work of this bill should be like the work of Nature herself, when on the face of a desolated land she restores what has been laid waste by the wild and savage hand of man. Its operations, we believe, will be quiet and gradual. We wish to alarm none; we wish to injure no one. What we wish is that, where there has been despondency, there shall be hope; where there has been mistrust, there shall be confidence; where there has been alienation and hate, there shall, however gradually, be woven the ties of a strong attachment between man and man. This, we know, cannot be done in a day. . . . In order that there may be a hope of its entire success, it (the bill) must be passed, not as a triumph of party over party, or class over class; not as the lifting up of an ensign to record the downfall of that which has once been great and powerful, but as a common work of common love and good-will to the common good of our common country. And my hope, at least, is high and ardent that we shall live to see our work prosper in our hand, and that in that Ireland which we desire to unite to England and Scotland by the only enduring ties—those of free-will and free affection—peace, order, and a settled and cheerful industry, will diffuse their blessings from year to year, and from day to day, over a smiling land."

Upon the principles at the root of the bill members of the House were pretty well agreed, and, in a forced division on the second reading, it received the extraordinary support of 442 against 11. A few, of course, denounced it; many Conservatives criticized its details; Sir Roundell Palmer, still an independent Liberal, declared it "a humiliating necessity"; Mr. Disraeli, though he voted for the measure, thought it "complicated, clumsy, and heterogeneous." But this sort of thing did no particular harm, and it eventually passed the House practically unchanged, went through the Lords without serious alteration, and became law on August 1st. Mr. Gladstone felt strongly upon this important measure. Writing, on June 20th, to Bishop Wilberforce, he said: "I consider the Irish Land Bill to stand by itself; it really appertains not so much to the well-being as to the being of civilized society, for the existence of society can hardly be said to deserve that name until the conditions of peace and order, and of mutual good-will and confidence, shall have been more firmly established in Ireland."

A little later he wrote to Earl Russell, who was then in Paris, that they had been having a most anxious time regarding the Bill, and added: "Often do I think of a saying of yours more than thirty years back which struck me ineffaceably at the time. You said that the keynote to our Irish debates was this: that it was not properly borne in mind that, as England is inhabited by Englishmen, and Scotland by Scotchmen, so Ireland is inhabited by Irishmen. The fear that our Land Bill may cross the water creates a sensitive state of mind among all Tories, many Whigs, and a few Radicals." This curious letter seems to hint at a certain development of the Home Rule theory of separate local interests, and is for that reason important.

Another great and useful measure, and one which ran through the House almost concurrently with the Land Bill, was an elaborate scheme for reorganizing the elementary education of the country, and establishing a national school system. It was badly needed. English statesmen seemed to have been afraid to face the question; education was largely in the uncontrolled hands of denominations and private parties; two-thirds of the children were destitute of proper, or any, instruction. The Church of England and other religious bodies had done their best, but the best was limited. On February 17th, therefore, Mr. W. E. Forster, Vice-President of the Privy Council, and the shrewd, honest, rugged statesman who afterwards became famous in connection with Irish affairs and the Imperial Federation movement, introduced a measure by which elective school boards were to be established in England and Wales, with power to frame by-laws compelling the attendance of all children from five to twelve years of age and living within the school district.

The existing Church and other schools were to be included in the grant of Government aid upon the condition of maintaining a certain standard of educational efficiency, submitting to the examination of State inspectors, and admitting a conscience clause in their regulations by which all and every religious conviction should be respected in the secular instruction given during school hours. The funds were to be raised in part from Treasury grants; in part from the fees paid in the great mass of the schools. Free schools were to be provided in districts where the poverty was considered by local authorities to make it necessary. At first the consensus of opinion seemed decidedly favourable. Then suddenly there arose objections which made the measure one of the most bitterly contested of all Mr. Gladstone's proposals. Some concessions had necessarily been made to the diverse religious principles of the schools, and this brought out the most vigorous and bitter opposition from the Nonconformists, who had hitherto constituted the very backbone of English Liberalism.

Mr. Forster for a time became intensely unpopular amongst them, and in this feeling the Premier was included. Upon the conscience clause and the principle of State aid to denominational schools they broke away in a body, and over and over again Mr. Gladstone had to depend upon Conservative support against his own followers. Upon one occasion, during the debates, the House witnessed a rare and notable occurrence. Mr. Edward Miall, an uncompromising and stern Nonconformist of the old-time Puritan type, had denounced the Premier as having led the Liberal party "through the valley of humiliation," and had concluded his speech by declaring that "we can't stand this sort of thing much longer." It was more than Mr. Gladstone could stand. Pale with anger, and almost trembling with excitement, he jumped to his feet, and, in tones vibrating with scorn, declared that:

> "We have been thankful to have the independent and honourable support of my honourable friend, but that support ceases to be of value when accompanied by reproaches such as these. I hope my honourable friend will not continue that support to the Government one moment longer than he deems it consistent with his sense of duty and right. For God's sake, Sir, let him withdraw it the moment he thinks it better for the cause that he has at heart that he should do so. So long as my honourable friend thinks fit to give us his support, we will co-operate with him for every purpose that we have in common; but when we think his opinions and demands exacting, when we think that he looks too much to the section of the community which he adorns, and too little to the interests of the people at large, we must then recollect that we, who have assumed the heavy responsibility of the Government of this great country, must endeavour to forget the parts in the whole, and to propose to ourselves no narrower object than the welfare of the Empire at large."

This spirited and remarkable deliverance had a decisive effect for the moment. It crushed Mr. Miall, though it left a bitterness in the minds of many, which had a strong influence when the general elections came on. But they were a long way off yet, and meantime this vital measure became law and one of the great legislative successes of the age. The school boards attracted men of the highest position and ability, and soon established an efficient and increasingly popular basis of national education. The London Board, for instance, had Lord Lawrence, the eminent former Viceroy of India, as its chairman, and numbered Professor Huxley amongst its members. Women were also eligible for membership, and soon took a pronounced share in the work generally.

Other minor measures and changes were carried into effect—notably, an Order-in-Council making entrance appointments to all the State departments, except the Foreign Office and those requiring professional knowledge, subject to open competition and examination. The Queen also voluntarily surrendered the Royal prerogative by which the Commander-in-Chief of the Army was recognized as a direct agent of the Crown, and that official was made subordinate to the Minister of War. An amendment to the Foreign Enlistment Act enabled any future Government to control the building or escape of ships, such as the "Alabama." Four remaining rotten boroughs were disfranchised; an Act was passed removing disabilities from clergymen who abandoned their profession; the half-penny postage for newspapers was established, and the half-penny—or one cent—post-card was introduced. Mr. Gladstone also arranged for the release of the Fenian prisoners in Dublin on condition of their leaving, and not returning to, the United Kingdom. Considerable discussion, and some strong criticism, resulted, but the Premier believed the step wise and warranted, and therefore carried it out.

During the session of 1871, the spirit of Reform still permeated the policy of Parliament and the action of its intrepid leader. The first important change undertaken was in connection with the army. Mr. Cardwell, the Secretary for War, introduced an elaborate scheme of reorganization, in which the chief and central point was the abolition of the power to purchase commissions and promotion. Compensation to those who had purchased their places, under the old and time-honoured system, was to be given to the extent of some $40,000,000, and the first appointments under the new scheme were to be awarded as the result of competitive examination. Naturally, the proposal to overturn a method of management which practically maintained the army as a profession for the scions of wealth and aristocracy, was hotly denounced. But the change had become necessary, although nearly every one agreed as to the bravery and skill of British officers under the old system, and even strong Radicals were prepared to admit that no better or more gallant officers could be obtained than the young men of aristocratic lineage who had, during many centuries, led British soldiers all over the globe.

The system was, however, opposed to the very basis of modern democracy, and it was bitterly unfair to the masses of the people. With the proposal for its abolition, and in connection with the general scheme of reorganization, Mr. Disraeli agreed, but left himself open to suggest changes of detail in Committee. And when it reached that stage, the criticism was so sharp and persistent that several clauses had to be withdrawn. As finally passed by the House, the bill abolished the purchase system, transferred the control of Militia and Volunteers from the Lords-Lieutenant of the counties to the Crown, enabled Parliament to fix the number of the militia from year to year, authorized Government to insist upon six months' continuous service as a condition to entering that force, and placed volunteers in camp under the Mutiny Act. The Lords rejected the measure by twenty-five majority; though, curiously enough, that total was made up of the Scotch and Irish representative peers, who were not hereditary members of the House, but elected by their associates in the respective countries.

Then followed one of the most remarkable actions in Mr. Gladstone's career. On the 20th of July, the Premier announced in the House, amid triumphant cheers, that, as the system of Purchase had been originally established by Royal Warrant, the Government had advised Her Majesty to abolish it in the same way. This had been done, and on the 1st of November ensuing Purchase in the army would be at an end. This settled the matter. His opponents could do absolutely nothing. If the Army Bill was not accepted by the Lords, the holders of commissions would get no compensation, and would consequently suffer irreparable injury. The Upper House, therefore, passed a vote of censure upon the Government, and also passed the bill. This summary method of settlement was, however, variously and greatly criticized, and cannot be said to have redounded to Mr. Gladstone's immediate popularity.

The Tories, of course, denounced it as a high-handed expedient, declared it part of a conspiracy against one of the Houses of Parliament, and naturally disliked the use of the Royal prerogative by a Liberal leader. The Radicals were strongly opposed to any use in any eventuality of such a prerogative. And that opinion was voiced in a powerful speech in the House by Mr. Henry Fawcett, who was now rising in repute as a keen and vigorous leader of this wing of the party. At the moment, it had appeared as a great party triumph, but, on reflection, it seemed that, if the Lords and the Tories were baffled by the Act, the Liberals and the Radicals were no less baffled by the application of a principle of Royal intervention, to which they had long been vigorously opposed.

A number of other important matters came up during the session. Some slight opposition was aroused in the House by the proposed grant of £30,000, and the annuity of £6,000, to H.R.H. Princess Louise upon her marriage to Lord Lorne. Mr. Gladstone strongly defended the grant, eulogized the economical management of the Royal household, praised the Queen for marrying her daughter to a subject of the realm, and spoke of the stability of the dynasty and the necessity of supporting it with dignity. The opposition collapsed, and a division, forced by Mr. P. A. Taylor, showed a majority of 350 to 1. A little later, the prevalence of lawlessness and Ribandism in Ireland generally; the fact of an agrarian conspiracy in Westmeath; and the increase of murder and other crimes in that country; made some action necessary.

Lord Hartington, Irish Chief Secretary, accordingly moved the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the lamentable state of affairs. A hot debate ensued, which was made memorable by Mr. Disraeli's denunciation of the Government in general, and of Mr. Gladstone in particular. He declared that neither time, nor labour, nor devotion had been grudged the latter in his efforts to improve the country's condition: "Under his influence, and at his instance, we have legalized confiscation, consecrated sacrilege, and condoned high treason; we have destroyed churches, we have shaken property to its foundation, and have emptied gaols; and now he cannot govern the country without coming to a Parliamentary Committee." This was singularly unjust, of course, but it was also singularly brilliant, and it was one of those clever—if somewhat unscrupulous—summaries which are bound to be widely circulated, and to be, consequently, effective and damaging. Mr. Gladstone defended his course, and the Committee was carried by a large majority.

Speaking a short time afterwards at Aberdeen on receiving the freedom of that city, the Premier referred warmly to the ingratitude now being shown by the Irish people. "There is," he declared, "nothing that Ireland has asked, and which this country and this Parliament have refused. This Parliament has done for Ireland what it would have scrupled to do for England and for Scotland. There remains now a single grievance—a grievance with regard to University education, which is not so entirely free in Ireland as it has now been made in England—but that is an exceptional subject. Still, I regard it as a subject that calls for legislation." Then he denounced Home Rule in words which have become historic. It would, if established, necessitate the application of the same principle to Scotland and Wales: "Can any sensible man, can any rational man, suppose that, at this time of day, in this condition of the world, we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of this country for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess for bestowing benefits, through legislation, on the country to which we belong?"

Events now followed each other in quick succession. A Ballot Bill was introduced in the Commons; keenly supported by Mr. Gladstone, and fiercely opposed by the Conservatives; discussed for six weeks, and finally passed with very great alterations. The Lords, however, at once threw it out. An important measure, which ultimately went through both Houses, was the University Tests Bill, introduced by the Premier, for the admission of lay students of any religious creed, and upon equal terms, to the Universities. A bill was presented, giving the franchise to female householders, and, though it was defeated, Mr. Gladstone created a sensation by declaring in favour of the principle, subject to the ballot first being established. Mr. Miall also caused a long debate by his motion asking that the Irish Church precedent should be followed in England and Scotland. It was rejected by 374 votes to 89, but was important as producing a very emphatic declaration from the Premier that the Church of England was not a foreign Church, but an outgrowth of national history and traditions:

> "It is not the number of its members or the millions of its revenues; it is the mode in which it has been, from a period shortly after the Christian era, and has never, for 1,300 years, ceased to be, the Church of the country, having been, at every period, ingrained with the hearts and the feelings of the great mass of the people, and having inter-twined itself

with the local habits and feelings, so that I do not believe there lives the man who could either divine the amount and character of the work my honourable friend would have to undertake were he doomed to be responsible for the execution of his own propositions, or who could, in the least degree, define or anticipate the consequences by which it would be attended."

After the adjournment of Parliament, the great domestic event of the year was Mr. Gladstone's address, in October, at Blackheath, before an audience —partly hostile—of some 20,000 persons. By this time the first flush of popular success had passed away, and the immense mass of varied legislation consummated in so brief a period, coupled with unfortunate complications abroad, had necessarily estranged some interests, aroused considerable antagonism in many directions, and lessened the popularity of the Government and of Mr. Gladstone to a perceptible extent. Upon this occasion the vast crowd was ready with all its passions aflame and all its party spirit aroused on both sides. For a brief moment it looked as if the Premier would not be heard, but gradually the magic music of his voice made for itself a place not only in the hearing, but ultimately in the hearts as well, of the chiefest part of the throng. It was a sustained and magnificent defence of his party, of his policy, and himself. For the time being it checked a flowing tide of reaction, and that is the highest compliment that can be paid a single oration.

The year 1872 opened with popular rejoicings upon the recovery of the Prince of Wales from his severe illness, and by the exhibition of a most remarkable degree of general attachment to the throne. The chief political feature of the time was the growing unpopularity of the Government. This feeling seemed to be personal as well as public. Some disliked Lord Hatherley, many Nonconformists denounced Mr. Forster, the brewing interests menaced Mr. Bruce, others positively hated Mr. Lowe. The appointment of Sir Robert Collier as a Lord Justice of Appeal brought some warm criticism upon Mr. Gladstone. To fill this post it was necessary, under the law, to have held a previous judicial office. The Premier accordingly appointed Sir Robert, who was then Attorney-General, to a position in the Court of Common Pleas, and two days later transferred him to the Judicial Committee—thus obeying the letter of the statute, but not exactly its spirit. A similar case was "the Ewelme scandal." The appointment in this instance was that of the Rev. W. W. Harvey to the vacant rectory of Ewelme. The law required that the holder of this office should be a member of Oxford Convocation, and Mr. Harvey was made a member of the Convocation in order to meet the statute. Much ado was made about these appointments, and, in the case of the first one, a vote of censure was only defeated by twenty-seven majority.

Mr. Gladstone's excuse in the Collier matter was that he could get no first-class judge to take the place, that it had to be filled, and that the Attorney-

General—whose capacity and fitness everybody admitted—was given it in the way described. In the second case, also, Mr. Harvey's suitability was not contested, and Mr. Gladstone stated that he knew nothing of the qualifying process. The session continued to be marked by other unpleasant incidents. A hot debate took place regarding certain proposals for the regulation of the parks, introduced by Mr. Ayrton, in the course of which the Premier accused Mr. Disraeli of having drawn on his memory for his jokes, and on his imagination for his facts. A very exciting and discreditable scene took place in connection with Sir Charles Dilke's motion for returns bearing upon the Civil List. Sir Charles had been making himself notorious and obnoxious in the country during the earlier part of the year by preaching Republicanism, and the members of the House had now apparently resolved to express their opinion of him. After Mr. Gladstone had replied to his criticism of the Queen, and in the most hearty manner denounced and explained current misrepresentation, the members began to hoot Dilke, and to howl down Mr. Auberon Herbert, who had risen to second his motion. Eventually a division was taken, which resulted in Noes, 276; Ayes, 2.

The great event of the session was the carrying of the Ballot Act. Originally, Mr. Gladstone had been opposed to the ballot. It had, since 1833, been the subject of annual motions, first and for many years by Mr. Grote, the historian of Greece, and then by others. It had formed a part of the Chartist programme, and had received for a long time the opposition of Lord John Russell himself. But in 1868 a committee, of which Lord Hartington was chairman, obtained evidence which converted Mr. Gladstone and many others. The measure, after a struggle, first in the Commons and then in the Lords, now, at last, became law, and has since that time done splendid service in purifying elections, and in the improvement of public order and political procedure. Another very important measure dealt with the liquor question. By it the magistracy were given the power of granting or withdrawing licenses under certain limitations; publicans were protected from vexatious appeals; the penalties for drunkenness were increased; the hours of selling were decreased; and securities against adulteration were provided. The law did good, and was enforced without difficulty, but it naturally gave great offence to the powerful liquor interest.

During the sitting of the House in 1873, Mr. Gladstone tried to reform the Irish University question. It was a well-meant, an immense, and able, attempt. But it was most ill-fated in itself, and unfortunate in its results. By it the Premier hoped to make a national system of higher education in Ireland, and to it he devoted all his skill and ingenuity. There were, at this time, two Universities in that country, and one was distinctly Protestant; the other absolutely secular. Neither, therefore, was acceptable or even endurable to Roman Catholics. Mr. Gladstone proposed to reconcile all conflicting claims by taking from the University of Dublin its Protestant character, making it the central University of the country; giving it teaching as well as examining powers; and affiliating with it Trinity College, the Colleges of Cork and Belfast, and the Catholic University, a body supported by private funds, and without a charter.

The new University was to have no chairs for moral philosophy, theology, or modern history, and was to be supported by proportionate allotments from Trinity, from the consolidated fund, from the fees of students, and from the surplus of Irish ecclesiastical property. It is impossible to describe the magnitude of this scheme—one which seemed to involve not only innumerable details, but every controversial subject in connection with religious, secular, and national education. Mr. Gladstone concluded his speech by saying, in part:

> "We have not spared labour and application in the preparation of this certainly complicated, and, I venture to hope, also comprehensive, plan. We have sought to provide a complete remedy for what we thought, and for what we have long marked and held up to public attention, as a palpable grievance—a grievance of conscience. But we have not thought that in removing that grievance we were discharging either the whole or the main part of our duty. It is one thing to clear obstructions from the ground; it is another to raise the fabric. And the fabric which we seek to raise is a substantive, organized system, under which all the sons of Ireland, be their professions, be their opinions, what they may, may freely meet in their own ancient, noble, historic University, for the advancement of learning in that country."

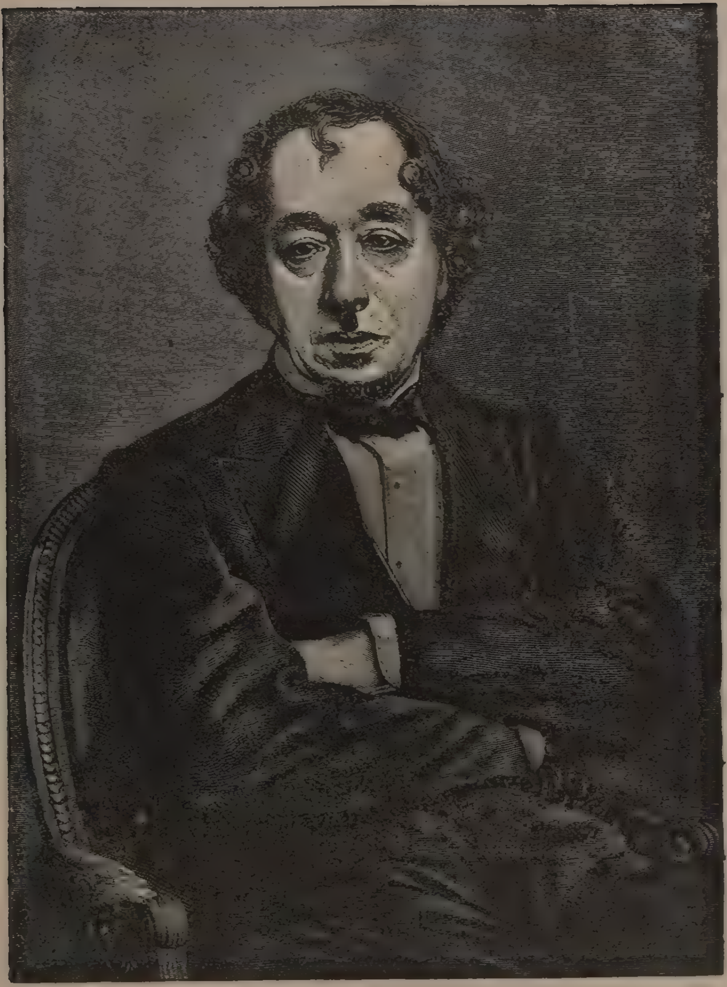
It was a noble aim and a great effort. But the opposition was too intense and varied to permit of its success. Mr. Fawcett, Radical as he was, opposed it in a speech of bitter strength. Mr. Lowe defended it in a surprisingly able speech, and, during the debates which ensued, Mr. Gladstone did his best. Upon the second reading, however, defeat came—though by the narrow majority of three—and the Premier promptly submitted his resignation to the Queen. His opponent, however, very wisely for himself, refused to take office under existing circumstances, and the Liberal leader had to re-assume his post. Mr. Lowe, having resigned his office—largely on account of the famous attempt to tax lucifer matches, and his consequent unpopularity amongst the many poor who lived by the sale of those useful little articles—the Premier took the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Mr. Bright came in as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Another important event of this much-disturbed session was the passage of Lord Selborne's Judicature Act—Sir Roundell Palmer had recently become Lord Chancellor under that title. A bill for the abolition of Tests in Dublin University was also carried, and a notable declaration made by Mr. Gladstone against the delivery of sermons in churches by Dissenters or laymen.

He also expressed an opinion in favour of household suffrage in Counties. During the recess a number of vigorous speeches were made in the country, but without much effect upon the growing unpopularity of the Government. For some time, in fact, Mr. Gladstone had been ahead of public opinion. His reforming zeal was too active and intense, and, while his great measures had necessarily alienated different elements, his minor measures had brought him discredit by receiving a number of defeats and checks. The members of his Government were, in many cases, not personally popular, but the reverse, and, to cap the climax, Mr. Disraeli seemed to be excelling himself in brilliant attack and clever fence.

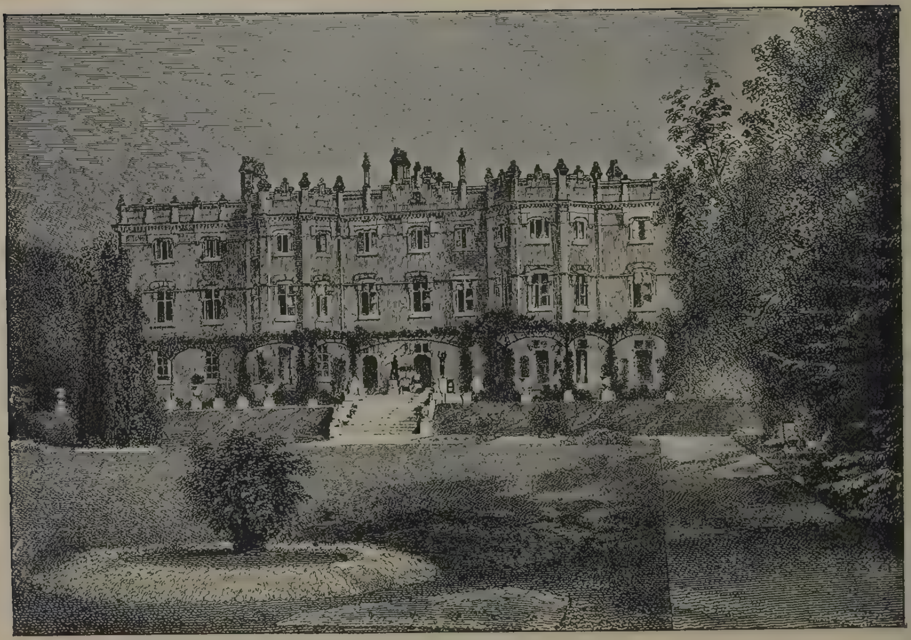
He traversed the country declaring that for five years the Ministry had harassed every trade, worried every profession, and assailed every institution, class, and species of property in the three kingdoms. The Bible, it was claimed, had been attacked in the Church and University legislation; and brewers knew too well where they had been injured. The "Beer and Bible" cry, therefore, became a potent force. And events now rapidly reached a crisis. Parliament had been called for February 5th, when, without a previous whisper of such a thing being intended, Mr. Gladstone, on January 23rd, issued a manifesto to the electors of Greenwich; and the announcement was at the same time made that the memorable Parliament of 1868 was dissolved. It came as a great surprise to the country. But the document accompanying the declaration was a clever one. It reviewed with justifiable pride the achievements of his Government, and then promised the people a diminution in the local taxation and a total repeal of the income tax.

Looking back now, and bearing in mind that a surplus was anticipated, and afterwards realized, of several million pounds, it appears not unlikely that Mr. Gladstone's skill would have enabled him to carry out this remarkable pledge. But his opponents represented it at the moment as the offer of a large and impossible bribe to the electorate, and it probably did the Premier more harm than good. However that may be, the end had come. The Liberals lost everywhere, and in the next House found themselves with only 244 members, as against 350 Conservatives and 58 Home Rulers. Mr. Gladstone himself was re-elected in Greenwich, but it was as second to a local distiller. Following the example of Mr. Disraeli in 1868, he at once tendered the resignations of himself and his colleagues. The Tory leader immediately proceeded to form his Government, and the Administration which had disestablished the Irish Church, adjusted the Irish land question, modified the liquor laws, abolished purchase in the army, founded a system of national education, and established the ballot, passed with all its great achievements and minor errors into the history of the country, and became inscribed upon the most cherished and sacred place in the heart of future Liberalism.



BENJAMIN DISRAELI, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1868, 1874-80.



HUGHENDEN MANOR,

Seat of the Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield.

CHAPTER XX.

VIVIAN GREY BECOMES PRIME MINISTER.

IN that sparkling creation of genius—Vivian Grey—Mr. Disraeli had, in the third decade of the century, made his hero say that "everything was possible." There can be no doubt that the statement voiced his own feelings, and foreshadowed his own rise. He possessed, during his whole career, that invaluable factor in success—self-confidence—and the combination of this quality with high abilities gave him the final victory over many and diverse difficulties. But it had been a hard struggle, and one which he had fought almost single-handed. A few faithful friends, such as Lord John Manners, he had always with him, but the bulk of his party had been cold, public opinion had been more than uncertain, and society, while charmed and fascinated by his personal qualities, had not been over-cordial in its political support.

All these things were now changed. The great rival of his Parliamentary life was defeated; the country had given him the largest Conservative majority since pre-Reform days; the House of Lords was, of course, at his service; the aristocracy looked upon him as the guardian of their rights; the Church as the probable saviour of its State connection. An assured position, a safe majority, a somewhat demoralized Opposition, a great opponent about to retire from the field—this was the situation when Mr. Disraeli proceeded to form his second and great administration. Lord Cairns again, and naturally, became Lord Chancellor. His effective debating powers, his marvellous skill in unpremeditated argument, his high character and legal reputation, made him a most valuable and indispensable member of any Tory Government. He filled, indeed, the place, and almost reached the power, of Lyndhurst. More need not be said.

Lord Salisbury, who had shown much administrative ability in his short tenure of the Indian Office during the last Conservative Government, was given the same post; and it reflected not a little credit upon Mr. Disraeli that he was willing to associate with himself, more and more closely, the rising career of a statesman who had, not so very many years before, been one of his severest critics. Mr. Gathorne Hardy became Secretary for War, and increased the reputation which he had already won in debate and administration. Sir Stafford Northcote, who had never forgotten the influence and value of his early training under Mr. Gladstone, was the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, if not brilliant, was at least safe. And it was just as well, perhaps, that not more than one leader with brilliant qualities should hold high place in the same Ministry. Mr. Richard A. Cross, hitherto unknown to fame, was made Home Secretary, in which difficult position he was destined to win a marked success. Lord Carnarvon, a type of English statesman exactly the reverse of Lord Kimberley, assumed charge of the Colonial Office, and, wherever possible, showed his Imperial sympathies. Lord John Manners, who, as a matter of course, formed part of any Government in which his life-long friend was a leader, became Postmaster-General, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach took the trying post of Irish Secretary, with the Duke of Abercorn as Lord-Lieutenant. The Duke of Richmond, a cautious, highly respected, old-fashioned Tory, became Lord President of the Council and leader in the Lords.

The new Government was in a most favourable position. It had succeeded to a surplus of nearly six million pounds, it found the country fairly prosperous, and was able to congratulate Sir Garnet Wolseley upon the splendid skill with which he had brought the Ashantee war to a victorious ending. The Opposition, on the other hand, was in a decidedly despondent condition. To quote a writer of the time, they had nothing to oppose. And, it may be added, they had nothing to propose. Rumours of the most disquieting kind were also current as to Mr. Gladstone's intentions. He had declared, in one of his campaign speeches, that if the country did not express confidence in the Liberal administration, he would consider himself entitled to limit his future services to his party. And, shortly before Parliament met, in a letter to Lord Granville, dated March 12th, he made his position clear, and, it must be admitted, placed his party in somewhat of a predicament.

In the course of this document, Mr. Gladstone announced that:

> "For a variety of reasons, personal to myself, I could not contemplate any unlimited extension of active political service, and I am anxious that it should be clearly understood that at my age I must reserve my entire freedom to divest myself of all the responsibilities of leadership at no distant time."

He went on to say that only occasional attendance at the House would be possible for him during the coming session, and that he should be glad to lay down the leadership, either at once, or at the beginning of the next session. The Liberal party accepted the provisional arrangement, and made the best of a position which laid it open to no little Ministerial pleasantry and political difficulty. Of course, there was a great deal of grumbling in the ranks, and considerable comparison between the unfortunate action of Mr. Gladstone and the unwearying patience with which Mr. Disraeli had led his party during so many hopeless years.

But the Liberal leader had a peculiar temperament. It was one which admitted extreme susceptibility to external influences, and there can be no doubt that the overwhelming defeat of his Ministry had deeply wounded him. He believed that his Government and party had done great services to the country since 1868, and probably felt that the people were guilty of something more than mere ingratitude in refusing a reward and recognition. No doubt his depression of mind affected his physical system, and crystallized the first impulsive desire for retirement into a settled determination. His great rival now had his opportunity. Let him use it, and let the people see the result of his policy and the consequences of their own folly. It will not be difficult to believe that some such reasons influenced him in this curious line of action—or inaction.

During the session of 1874, however, Mr. Gladstone took, upon occasion, a vigorous and prominent part. Theoretically, the Liberal position was that of the cast of Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark withdrawn. Practically, the Prince was still on hand at given intervals in the play. For a brief period the proceedings in Parliament appeared the very embodiment of harmony. Mr. Gladstone, in the debate on the Address, mildly defended the late Government's course. Mr. Disraeli, a little later, mildly defended his opponent against a proposed vote of censure. Sir Stafford Northcote confessed the correctness of Mr. Gladstone's last Budget, and announced the realization of his expectations regarding a surplus.

But this happy condition of affairs did not last long. In the House of Lords, the Duke of Richmond had introduced a measure which was brief but important. It proposed to entirely abolish the system of lay patronage in the Established Church of Scotland, and make it over to the congregations. The male communicants were in future to control the patronage. Looking at the proposal calmly, and after a lapse of time, it is not easy to see why it should have been opposed. Many Liberal peers, such as the Duke of Argyle, supported the Bill; but when the second reading came up in the Commons, Mr. Gladstone reappeared, after an interval of absence, and rose, amid ringing cheers, to speak upon an amendment which asked for delay, in order to make further inquiry and obtain further information. The ex-Premier handled his subject with all his usual facility and eloquence, but the arguments advanced must be considered as disappointing.

The principal reason given was the injustice done to the Free Church, which had left the Kirk so many years before on this very question of patronage. There was no arrangement made for the return of its adherents to the Church of their fathers; and this measure would practically and naturally strengthen very considerably the State Establishment, to which the Free Church had been so long, and so strongly, opposed. But, to an impartial student of the subject, it is difficult to see why the reform was to be condemned because it came after the great secession instead of before, or how the Government could do more for the reunion of the churches than to remove the original cause of their separation. The real grievance, however, lay in the probable strengthening of the Establishment, and here Mr. Gladstone could have taken logical ground by declaring himself opposed to the State Church of Scotland as such. This, however, he did not do. He was "not an idolater of Establishments." He was quite willing that his character should, in future, be tried "simply and solely by the proceedings, to which I was a party, with regard to the Irish Church." But he believed that the Kirk of Scotland, though the Church of a minority, was still, "justly and wisely," tolerated by the people. He could not, however, consent to legislation which helped that Church at the expense of the great Presbyterian communities who had been driven from its ranks.

Mr. Disraeli replied briefly, welcomed the Liberal chief back to his place in the House, defended the proposed legislation, and expressed the hope that Mr. Gladstone's epitaph would not include the disestablishment of any more Churches. The second reading of the bill was carried by 307 to 109 votes, and it finally passed into law. A far more important measure, and the real event of the session, was the introduction of the Public Worship Regulation Bill in the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It provided that the Bishops of the Church of England should have that directory power as to forms of worship which, by the constitution of the Church, would seem to have been intended. Subject to the advice of a board composed of clergymen and laity combined, each bishop was to have authority to deal with ritualistic practices and ceremonies within his diocese. An appeal would, however, be permitted to the Primate, whose decision—if in harmony with the opinion of another board of advisers—was to be final. It was really a measure to check and control Ritualism. In the opinion of the Archbishop of Canterbury, it was time to put an end to the substitution of "a spurious Romanism" for the doctrines of the Church of England.

After passing the Upper House, the measure came down to the Commons, and its second reading was moved by Mr. Russell Gurney. At first, Mr. Disraeli took a non-committal attitude, but finally supported the bill with all his force and ability. Mr. Gladstone contributed the sensation of the hour by his fierce onslaughts upon it in principle, object, and detail. Sir William Harcourt defended it with energy, and the House was soon to witness the spectacle of two Liberal leaders fighting on opposite sides. Meanwhile, Archbishop Tait, during the months of struggle which followed, used all his tact and influence to help the measure he had fathered, and from which he expected great results to the unity and ceremonial purity of the Church. Mr. Gladstone proposed six amendments to the bill. They dealt with the variety of current interpretations concerning Church rubrics, and the diversities of local custom; declared in favour of liberty in opinion and practice within the Church, and against any inflexible rule of uniformity; acknowledged the devotion of the clergy, and proclaimed a willingness to provide securities against any real change in the spirit or substance of the established religion; and expressed high appreciation of the concurrence of the Church authorities with the Government in any legislation concerning the Church which might, at any time, be required.

Mr. Gladstone made a strong speech, and was replied to by Sir William Harcourt. The passage-at-arms was a keen one between the two leaders, and, like the similar difference of opinion between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Disraeli, created considerable political interest. It was in dealing with this question that the Conservative Premier described the Marquess of Salisbury as "a great master of gibes, and flouts, and sneers." And, naturally, any proposal which endeavoured to control Ritualism at a time when the whole country was watching and debating its growing influence, was well calculated to stir up personal feelings, and create a situation

> "When, sharp and stinging,
> The angry words flew daily to and fro;
> Friend against friend the polished missile flinging,
> Each seeking who should launch the keenest blow."

But the opinion of Parliament was all in favour of the measure, and Mr. Gladstone consequently withdrew his Resolutions. The bill finally became law, though it was never to any marked extent operative or useful against the practices complained of. Another proposal which the Liberal leader hotly contested was contained in Lord Sandon's Endowed Schools Amendment Act. Amongst the changes suggested in this bill was the restoration to the control of the Church of England of a number of schools which had some ecclesiastical antecedents, but were not now denominational. Mr. Gladstone declared the proposals to be retrogressive and unwise, and eventually the opposition became so keen that the Premier deemed it wise to drop them. With this important omission, therefore, the bill passed.

Before the second session of the House met, his resignation of the leadership was announced by Mr. Gladstone. For the moment he had become tired of politics. The reaction from the intense strain and rushing movement of his six years' administration made him desire a change of arena, and he had, indeed, already chosen the ever-congenial field of ecclesiastical discussion and argument. During the latter part of his forty odd years of political struggle, he had more than once hinted at retirement and rest. Writing in 1861, he declared that "events are not wholly unwelcome which remind me that my own public life is now in its thirtieth year, and ought not to last very many years longer." In 1867 he had told Earl Russell that he did not desire his political life to be very much prolonged. On May 6th, 1873, Bishop Wilberforce records in his diary: "Gladstone much talking how little real good work any Premier had done after sixty; Peel; Palmerston, his work all really done before; Duke of Wellington added nothing to his reputation after." On May

10th, the Bishop adds: "Gladstone again talking of sixty as full age of Premier."

And now he wrote decisively to Lord Granville in reference to his previous partial retirement. In this letter—dated January 13th, 1875—Mr. Gladstone observes that he had made a careful review of the circumstances of the day, both public and private: "The result has been that I see no public advantage in continuing to act as the leader of the Liberal party; and that, at the age of sixty-five, and after forty-two years of a laborious public life, I think myself entitled to retire at the present opportunity. This retirement is dictated to me by personal views as to the best method of spending the closing years of my life." As it turned out, this action was a mistake. Although the Marquess of Hartington was chosen as head of the party in his place, and made a careful and efficient leader, Mr. Gladstone possessed too great a personality to render it possible for him to sit in Parliament and really serve in a subordinate capacity. At the time when he resigned there were no vital problems upon the national horizon, but when they swept in sight, as was soon the case, it became clearly out of the question for the late leader to remain quiescent and let his life-long opponent carry matters with a high hand. And there is no doubt, too, that, in a moment of depression, he had underestimated his own personal vigour and power of mental and physical work.

Hence a retirement which it is not unlikely he afterwards regretted; which, for the time being, hampered his party; and which such an authority as the *Times* accepted as a final departure from the scene of his conflicts and victories. Mr. Disraeli, however, was more far-seeing, and, meeting a friend in Piccadilly not long after the event, observed with quiet emphasis, and in reply to a query: "There will be a return from Elba." The expressions of regret were general, and many papers voiced the hope that the resignation might not be really permanent. Mr. Forster, in a speech at Bradford, was especially sympathetic: "It is difficult for any one," said he, "who has not been brought into close contact with him, and seen him under occasions of difficulty such as those in which a colleague has seen him—it is difficult for any one who has not been in that position to realize what an example of purity, of self-sacrifice, and of disinterestedness he has set to politicians throughout the country, and to what an extent he has raised the tone of political life." There were, of course, able men to take his place, but there was no great national figure such as Gladstone himself. Bright and Lowe, Forster and Harcourt, Goschen and Hartington, were all discussed, but the final choice of the latter was probably the best selection which could have been made.

Mr. Disraeli was now the dominant figure of the House of Commons, of the Government, and of the country. He had his opportunity, and it cannot be denied that it was fully used. The air became alive with the inspiration of a new, and, it was claimed, greater state of things. The Imperial destiny of England was the Tory watchword, and the cause of unbounded enthusiasm at popular meetings; the Imperial interests of England were to be the great care of the new Government; the England of Elizabethan days was to be once more a fact, and Great Britain was to find itself in the highest place amongst the nations of Europe. The policy soon began to take effect. The Prince of Wales went on a visit to India, and made a tour of gorgeous and impressive magnitude amongst the susceptible Eastern subjects of England. Lord Lytton, who had won fame as a poet under the signature of "Owen Meredith," and before his distinguished father's death had obtained some experience as a diplomatist, was despatched as Governor-General.

Meanwhile the Queen had been created Empress of India, and, amid scenes of Oriental magnificence, Lord Lytton had the privilege of proclaiming Her Majesty's assumption of what appeared to the Eastern world not only a new title, but a new and greater power. The Suez Canal shares were bought from the Khedive for $20,000,000, and some six years later were admitted by Mr. Gladstone to have doubled in value. The purchase gave England the command of the waterway to the East, and incidentally increased her influence and interest in Egypt. The Colonies were given an unexpected amount of attention. Lord Carnarvon tried to effect the confederation of South Africa; Mr. Disraeli, in more than one speech, referred in flattering, and at that time unusual, terms to Canada; closer Imperial unity came to be advocated in many quarters. The Conservative leader went to the Upper House as Earl of Beaconsfield. Then came the long battle over the Eastern question, the drawing upon the vast reserve fund of troops in India to aid England in Europe; the revelation to the world of a new and extensive power for use when required; the throwing down of the gauntlet to Russia, and the consequent Treaty of Berlin; the return of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury, bringing "Peace with Honour," and their period of great but brief triumph. An effort was made to strengthen the frontier of India against Russia by the use of a portion of Afghanistan, and the Transvaal was annexed to the Crown. The Marquess of Lorne and the Princess Louise were sent to govern Canada, and to promote still further the Imperial sentiment which Lord Dufferin's silvery eloquence had been inspiring.

Such, in a word, was the Imperial policy, and such were the leading national events of these stirring years. Much was undeniably done to strengthen the Empire; much good was effected in promoting British prestige abroad and enhancing the real external power of England. But domestic legislation was largely neglected, and the personality of Gladstone seems for a time to have been overlooked. For some years the former consideration was not greatly regarded. There had, perhaps, being a surfeit of reforms. But there was no excuse for underestimating the influence of Mr. Gladstone. His eloquence was as great as ever, his restlessness was obvious, his activity in various controversies was world-wide, and there could have been little doubt, two years after his nominal retirement, that a sudden return to politics was possible at any moment. The Bulgarian question afforded the occasion and will be dealt with more fully elsewhere. And, aside from that great central contest of the period, Mr. Gladstone earnestly opposed the general policy of the Government.

To his mind, it was flashy, wasteful, Jingoistic. He did not want any extension of empire. He did not believe in increased burdens and responsibilities. He did not want additional influence in Egypt, or the acquisition of Cyprus, or the annexation of the Transvaal. He opposed the purchase of the Suez Canal shares. Mr. Disraeli declared that "in the great chain of fortresses which we possess, almost from the metropolis of India, the Suez Canal is a means of securing the free intercourse of the waters—is a great addition to that security, and one we should prize." Mr. Gladstone thought that the step increased English responsibilities without equivalent benefits. "If war breaks out," he observed, at Glasgow, in 1879, "and if the channel of the Suez Canal becomes vital or material to our communication with India, we shall not secure it one bit the better because we have been foolish enough to acquire a certain number of shares in the canal. We must secure it by the strong hand."

He opposed the motion to make the Queen Empress of India. Mr. Disraeli introduced his Royal Titles Bill on February 17th, 1876, and summarized his reasons for the proposal as follows:

> "We have reason to feel that it is a step which will give great satisfaction, not merely to the princes, but to the nations of India. They look forward to some act of this kind with intense interest, and by various modes they have conveyed to us their desire that such a policy should be pursued. I cannot myself doubt that it is one also that will be agreeable to the people of the United Kingdom, because they must feel that such a step gives a seal, as it were, to that sentiment which has long existed, and the strength of which has been increased by time, and that is the unanimous determination of the people of this country to retain our connection with the Indian Empire. And it will be an answer to those mere economists and those foreign diplomatists who announce that India is to us only a burden or a danger."

There was a good deal of opposition to the policy, though, looking back upon the years that have gone since then, it is a little difficult to see the practical ground for it. Mr. Lowe was particularly unfortunate in some of his phrases, and gravely asked in one speech how the Parliament of a future day might feel when the Eastern Empire was lost, and they "came to alter the style and to blot out India from the titles of an English sovereign." Mr. Gladstone seems to have chiefly disliked the title itself as having too many associations of conquest, tyranny, and ancient wickedness. This was the line he took in the House, and in a letter to a correspondent, published in the *Times* on March 27th, he sums up his views very clearly: "In my opinion, the project was conceived in error, brought forth in error, and, like all error, only requires open, public exposition and investigation to be shown in all its imperfections as shallow, baseless, and absurd. In my opinion, the word Imperator can only be properly understood when taken in conjunction with *imperium*. According to Roman usage, if not actual law, the title Imperator was conferred upon a conquering general, and *imperium* meant the power he possessed of compelling the fulfilment of his behests by the use of physical force. In its correct, historical, and classical, sense, the title Imperator belongs to Clive; it never could or should be tacked to the Crown of the eminently humane and august lady who reigns over this realm."

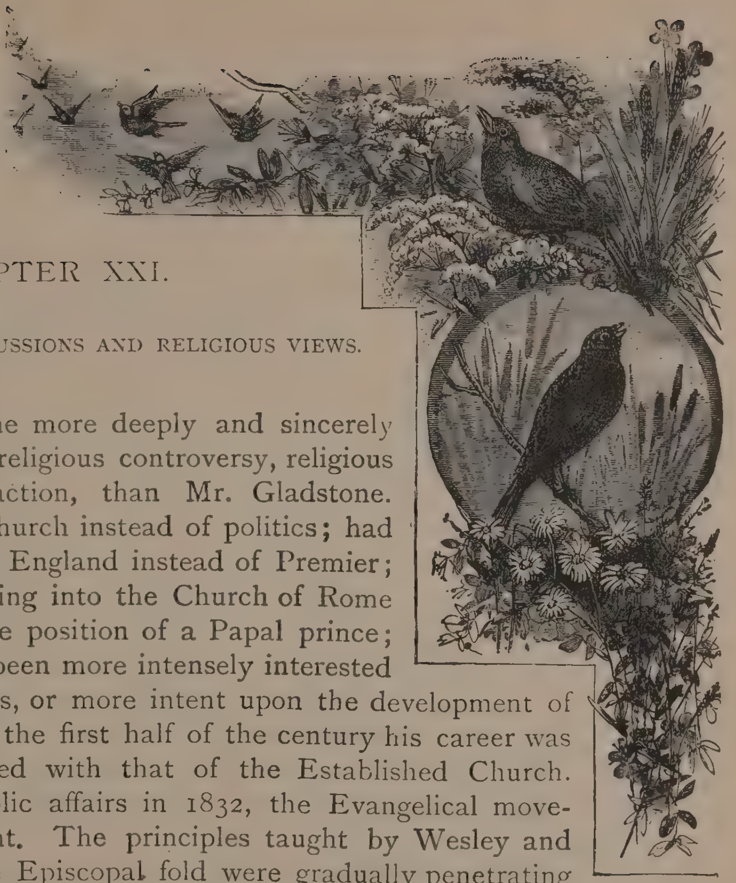
Eventually, the measure passed by a very large majority, the Premier taking occasion to announce that the title would not be assumed in England itself or be permitted to in any way derogate from the supreme and traditionary honour of Her Majesty's designation of Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. Mr. Disraeli's best answer to all general objections was the simple statement that "The amplification of titles is founded upon a great respect for local influences, for the memory of distinguished deeds, and passages of interest in the history of countries. It is only by the amplification of titles that you can often touch and satisfy the imagination of nations; and that is an element which governments must not despise." There is much in this argument, and, while Mr. Gladstone's opinion regarding the European associations of this particular title were correct, the development of events has, since then, made it lose force, if not become in itself changed. The imagination of the Eastern peoples was, in fact, touched beneficially; and the growth of the Queen's Colonial dominions has brought a new and greater meaning to the old-time word "Empire," and its corollary designation of Empress.

The years which immediately followed the development of this triple Indian policy by Mr. Disraeli—the Suez Canal purchase, the visit of the Prince of Wales, and the change in the Royal title—were years of intense activity and work for his great rival. As soon as he had temporarily exhausted the wide field of ecclesiastical controversy, Mr. Gladstone plunged into the Eastern question, and made England ring with his denunciations. The fiery cross of agitation was raised aloft and never lowered until his name and influence triumphed at the polls in 1880. Yet it was, in many ways, a peculiar and unique struggle. His position as a private member, and not a recognized leader, gave opportunities to opponents which they were not slow to use, and many were the unpleasant encounters with inferior men and the somewhat impudent attacks and remarks which he had to endure in Parliament. In a sense, they were not unnatural, because Mr. Gladstone's crusade against the Government soon became so strenuous, and he was himself so deeply in earnest and so fervent in his personal denunciations, that bitter enmities were aroused as a matter of course, and many admirers of Beaconsfield came to positively hate his militant rival. At one time, this feeling extended to the masses in London, and the great moral crusader of modern days actually found himself unable to traverse the streets of the metropolis without protection.

Mr. H. W. Lucy, in his "Diary of Two Parliaments," records one memorable scene at a moment when feelings and passions were greatly aroused:

> "Scene, division lobby of the House of Commons; date, 12th April, 1878; time, 9.20 p.m. Gladstone is walking along the lobby, having recorded his vote against a hasty proposal to conduct the business of Parliament in secret. The Conservative majority in the other lobby observe him, through the glass door, and suddenly set up a yell of execration, which could scarcely be more violent if the murderer of Lord Leitrim, flying for sanctuary to Westminster, were discovered skulking in the lobby. The crowd increases till it reaches the proportions of forty or fifty English gentlemen, all well educated, many of good birth, who, with hand held to mouth to make the sound shriller, howl and groan, while some even shake their fists. Gladstone, startled at the cry, looks up and sees the crowd. He pauses a moment, and then, advancing close up to the glass door, calmly surveys the yelling mob.
>
> "On the one side, the slight figure, drawn up to its full height, and the pale, stern face steadfastly turned towards the crowd. On the other, the jeering, mocking, gesticulating mob. Between them, the glass door, and the infinite space that separates a statesman from a mob."

And during these years it must also be remembered that Mr. Gladstone was forcing forward his own party. Its nominal leaders upon many occasions opposed him; its Parliamentary rank and file frequently refused to support him; its members seemed to very often personally dislike him. Yet, by the enthusiasm of his nature, the eloquence of his speech, the intensity of his exertions, he broke through the bars of Conservative strength, crushed the wall of Liberal indifference, overcame the obstacles of private political position, and made the victory of 1880 the veritable apotheosis of a great personality.



CHAPTER XXI.

ECCLESIASTICAL DISCUSSIONS AND RELIGIOUS VIEWS.

FEW men have gone more deeply and sincerely into questions of religious controversy, religious belief, and religious action, than Mr. Gladstone. Had he entered the Church instead of politics; had he become Primate of England instead of Premier; had he followed Manning into the Church of Rome and ultimately won the position of a Papal prince; he could hardly have been more intensely interested in theological questions, or more intent upon the development of religious life. During the first half of the century his career was marvellously intertwined with that of the Established Church. When he entered public affairs in 1832, the Evangelical movement was at its height. The principles taught by Wesley and Whitefield without the Episcopal fold were gradually penetrating within it, and the religious activity of the Dissenters was in every direction weakening the influence of a Church which seemed for the moment to have lost even a semblance of spiritual strength.

Evangelicalism, in fact, was a sort of religious liberalism, which proposed to break down the exclusive barriers of the State Church, as political Liberalism was already destroying the walls of aristocratic and exclusive government. It was also a strong and determined reaction against the prevailing dulness of religious life, and aimed at an aggressive line of action and preaching such as had for some time been absent from Anglican pulpits. It cared little for mere forms and ceremonies, traditions, or even the sacraments of the Church. And it was essentially radical in aim and performance. Writing, in 1879, in the *British Quarterly Review*, Mr. Gladstone says that, "in lay life generally, it did not ally itself with literature, art, and general cultivation; but it harmonized very well with the money-getting pursuits. While the Evangelical clergyman was, almost of necessity, a spiritual and devoted man, the Evangelical layman might be, and sometimes was, the same; but there was in his case far more room for a composition between the two worlds, which left on him the mark of exclusiveness, and tended to a severance from society, without securing an interior standard of corresponding elevation."

Mr. Gladstone was in early life, and has always remained, what is called "High Church" in opinion and practice. He had, therefore, in the years immediately following 1832, to face a position in which the apostolical authority of the Church was being disregarded, while its special functions were falling into some degree of desuetude, and its ceremonial observances were receiving less and less attention. Naturally, this condition of affairs induced a considerable amount of free speculation and rationalistic literature, and, dating from the appearance of the famous "Tracts for the Times," caused the development of many schools of more or less religious thought. But chiefly important and above all others in its results was the Tractarian movement. It was the direct antithesis of Evangelicalism. It aimed at a revival of Church authority, an enforcement of Church sacraments, an encouragement of Church ceremonial, a beautifying of Church worship and its surroundings. From almost the inception of the movement, its chief promoters—Richard Hurrell Froude, who died so prematurely; John Henry Newman; John Keble, the author of "The Christian Year"; and the Rev. Dr. Pusey—looked to Mr. Gladstone for aid and support. And for many years they received it warmly and enthusiastically.

Their great underlying principle of a Church which had a direct and Divine mission through the apostolical descent of its bishops, received his adhesion, while their desire to enforce the ritual of the Establishment, and make it more and more a part of real worship within the Church, had also his earnest support. Writing in 1879, Mr. Gladstone declared that "Tractarianism, or, as it is now more commonly called, Ritualism, has infected or pervaded the entire services of the Anglican Church, and redeemed them, at least externally, from a state of what was too often absolute degradation, in a religious point of view. There are, perhaps, few even of the churches known as Evangelical in which the services and the structural arrangements do not bear marks of the influence thus derived." But this development towards Ritualism, and what are now called High Church principles, was only one branch of the Tractarian movement proper. In a modified way, it was the line which Mr. Gladstone maintained; the path which Dr. Pusey followed.

The other development was towards Rome, and, in the course of years, it included many of Mr. Gladstone's greatest friends. Carried to an extreme, the doctrine of Apostolical succession led some along this beaten road; others were affected by temperament; others found the Roman Catholic faith a means of relief from long and painful doubt. The latter influence controlled Hope-Scott and Newman. Mr. Gladstone struggled hard to keep the former in the Church. A letter, written on May 15th, 1845, shows not only the tendency in his friend's mind, but the writer's own keen analytical faculty:

> "You have given me lessons that I have taken thankfully; believe me, I do it in payment of a debt, if I tell you that your mind and intellect, to which I look up with reverence under a consciousness of immense inferiority, are much under the domination, whether it be known or not known to yourself, of an agency lower than their own, more blind, more variable, more difficult to call inwardly to account and make to answer for itself—the agency, I mean, of painful and disheartening impressions—impressions which have an unhappy and powerful tendency to realize the very worst of what they picture. Of this fact, I have repeatedly noted the signs in you."

Some months afterwards, as the mental conflict still continued, Mr. Gladstone wrote, in concluding a letter dated the second Sunday in Advent: "And now may the Lord grant as heretofore, so ever we may walk in His holy house as friends, and know how good it is to dwell together in unity! But, at all events, may He, as He surely will, compass you about with His presence and by His holy angels, and cause you to wake up after His likeness and to be satisfied with it." All through this correspondence of many years with Hope—he had not yet taken the additional name—as well as with Bishop Wilberforce and others, a similarly deep religious spirit permeates Mr. Gladstone's writings, just as the ecclesiastical idea permeated his public policy. In 1851 the crash came, the Tractarian party split in two, and Manning, Newman, Hope-Scott, and thousands of minor men, went over to the Church of Rome. Mr. Gladstone felt the result keenly, and, writing to Hope-Scott, on June 22nd, said:

> "It is no matter of merit to me to feel strongly on the subject of that change. It may be little better than pure selfishness. I have too good reason to know what this year has cost me; and so little hope have I that the places now vacant ever can be filled up for me that the marked character of those events in reference to myself rather teaches me this lesson—the work to which I had aspired is reserved for other and better men. And if that be the Divine will, I so entirely recognize its fitness that the grief would so far be small to me were I alone concerned. The pain, the wonder, the mystery, is this—that you should have refused the higher vocation you had before you. The same words, and all the same words, I should use of Manning, too."

Meantime, and during succeeding years, Mr. Gladstone became involved in the prolonged Puseyite controversy. As a friend and ally of Dr. Pusey, in earlier days, he stood—not always, but more or less often—by his side in recurring controversies; and his votes at Oxford Convocation and in Parliament were generally along the extreme High Church lines. Lord Shaftesbury, in his diary, under date of October 12th, 1841, records his own and the Evangelical view of this school: "The Puseyite object is to effect a reconciliation with Rome; ours with Protestantism; they wish to exalt Apostolical succession so high as to make it paramount to all moral purity and all doctrinal truth; we to respect it so as to shift it from Abiathar to Zadok." The theological contests of that period are, however, too violent and varied to be entered into in any detail. Suffice it to say that Sydney Smith, with his usual wit, hit off a certain popular opinion of the school which Lord Shaftesbury so vigorously denounced, in the following lines:

> "Pray tell me what's a Puseyite? 'Tis puzzling to describe
> This ecclesiastic genus of a pious hybrid tribe;
> At Lambeth and the Vatican, he's equally at home,
> Altho', 'tis said, he rather gives the preference to Rome."

But this description, clever as it is, hardly includes Mr. Gladstone. He was High Church, but he was never really inclined towards Romanism. He believed in Apostolical succession, but it was as an independent Church. He gave many votes in different quarters, which indicated friendliness towards Rome as a part of the Christian community of the world, but he detested the idea of Roman Catholic supremacy, infallibility, or political power. He liked High Church services and a certain amount of ritualistic observance, but drew the line at the Confessional and other essentially Roman doctrines. In this latter connection, he wrote Bishop Wilberforce, March 11th, 1867: "Yesterday I saw, for the first time, the service in a Ritualistic church proper. There was much in it that I did not like, could not defend as good, perhaps could not claim toleration for."

And a few years later he made very clear his attitude towards Ritualism and the Roman Catholic Church. The discussions in Parliament concerning the Public Worship Bill, in 1874, had made him the apparent champion of Ritualism against those who desired to check its progress and limit its power. He had vigorously opposed those proposals, but in reality not from love of the practices complained of. His action was taken mainly upon the ground that serious interference with the clergy was unwise, that too great power was to be given the Bishops, and that danger, therefore, of serious import existed to many local usages and traditions which were in themselves harmless or even beneficial in nature. He had concluded his speech upon that occasion by urging the value of clerical independence. "You talk," he said, "of the observance of the law. Why, Sir, every day and night the clergyman of the Church of England, by the spirit he diffuses around him, by the lessons he imparts, lays the nation under a load of obligation to him The eccentricities of a handful of men, therefore, can never make me forget the illustrious merit of the services done by the mass of the clergy in an age which is above all others luxurious, and, I fear, selfish and worldly. These are the men who hold up to us a banner on which is written the motto of eternal life, and of the care for things unseen, which must remain the chief hope of man through all the vicissitudes of his mortal life."

But whether defending Ritualism or not, his opposition to Mr. Disraeli and Archbishop Tait regarding this particular measure made Mr. Gladstone "the delight and glory of the Ritualists." A Committee, appointed to defend the

Ritualistic Church of St. Alban's, Holborn, against the Bishop of London, passed a public resolution, at this time, expressing their "gratitude for his noble and unsupported defence of the rights of the Church of England," while many Churchmen rallied, both personally and politically, to his side. Meanwhile, the controversy went on with ever-increasing heat, as was natural when a leader like Disraeli termed Ritualism "mass in masquerade"; and Lord Houghton, in his witty way, called it "the Colorado beetle of ecclesiasticism." But Mr. Gladstone, though willing to oppose the Premier for the reasons already mentioned, and perhaps a little for reasons which may easily be understood, was not desirous of permanently posing as a wholesale defender of Ritualistic practices.

In October following the Parliamentary session of 1874, he, therefore, contributed to the *Contemporary Review* an essay entitled "What is Ritualism?" It was a curious article, and one which excited keen interest and intense discussion, and, naturally, attained a very great circulation. The author defined Ritualism in his own remarkable way: "It is unwise, undisciplined reaction from poverty, from coldness, from barrenness, from nakedness; it is departure from measure and from harmony in the annexation of appearance to subject, of the outward to the inward; it is the caricature of the beautiful; it is the conversion of help into hindrances; it is the attempted substitution of the secondary for the primary aim, and the real failure and paralysis of both." But he held to the orthodox High Church view that in many ways it had been originally beneficial, and especially in helping to destroy the old-time deadness in the Church. And to him it was mainly a liking for ornament and ritual—a matter of æsthetic taste. There was no hidden meaning or symbolism of Rome in these observances, and their abuse could, therefore, be safely left to the healing influences of time.

Mr. Gladstone then continued in words which involved him in the keenest of all his ecclesiastical discussions:

> "There is a question which it is the special purpose of this paper to suggest for consideration by my fellow-Christians generally, which is more practical and of greater importance, as it seems to me, and has far stronger claims on the attention of the nation and of the rulers of the Church, than the question whether a handful of the clergy are, or are not, engaged in an utterly hopeless and visionary effort to Romanize the Church and the people of England. At no time since the sanguinary reign of Mary has such a scheme been possible. But if it had been possible in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, it would still have become impossible in the nineteenth; when Rome has substituted for the proud boast of *semper eadem* a policy of violence and change in faith; when she has refurbished and paraded anew every rusty tool she was fondly thought to have disused; when no one can become her convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another; and when she has equally repudiated modern thought and ancient history."

Needless to say, such a declaration of opinion from a prominent statesman, and one who had himself aided in giving Roman Catholics liberty of education, worship, and public position, created a *furore* of controversy. Criticism, condemnation, and defence followed, and in July, 1875, he published a sort of general reply, entitled, "Is the Church of England worth Preserving?" He urged in this article the desirability of peace within the Church; the danger of secession from its fold; the fact that mutual obstinacy in the two Church parties might result in a severance which would precipitate disestablishment. The portion of his first article referring to the Roman Catholic Church had been already elaborated and defended in the famous pamphlet, entitled "The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance; a Political Expostulation." He fiercely attacked in this memorable pamphlet the whole doctrine of Papal Infallibility, and placed the position of affairs before the public in these strong words:

> "Absolute obedience, it is boldly declared, is due to the Pope, at the peril of salvation, not alone in faith, in morals, but in all things which concern the discipline and government of the Church. . . . It is well to remember that this claim is lodged in open day by, and in the reign of, a Pontiff who has condemned free speech, free writing, a free press, toleration of nonconformity, liberty of conscience, the study of civil and philosophical matters in independence of the ecclesiastical authority, marriage, unless sacramentally contracted, and the definition by the State of the civil rights of the Church; who has demanded for the Church, therefore, the title to define its own civil rights, together with a divine right to civil immunities, and a right to use physical force; and who has also proudly asserted that the Popes of the middle ages, with their councils, did not invade the rights of princes; as, for example, Gregory III., of the Emperor Henry IV.; Innocent III., of Raymond of Toulouse; Paul III., in deposing Henry VIII.; or Pius V., in performing the like paternal office for Elizabeth."

Mr. Gladstone went on to declare that the doctrine of Infallibility, as proclaimed in 1870, was a menace to modern liberty, and a return, or attempted return, to the old system of ecclesiastical despotism. Roman Catholicism was not spreading in England, he thought, to any great extent, except amongst some of the upper classes and among women. But none the less he considered the time to have come for a protest against these dangerous pretensions of the Pope of Rome. The circulation of this pamphlet was enormous and absolutely unprecedented. At the end of a few weeks, 120,000 copies had been sold, and an immense number of replies published. Archbishop Manning, Dr. Newman, Bishop Ullathorne, Bishop Vaughan, Monsigneur Capel, Lord Petre, Lord Herries, Sir George Bowyer, Lord Robert Montague, Bishop Clifford, Canon Oakley, and many others, replied. They clearly indicated, in these contributions to the discussion, that Roman Catholics were far from united regarding the Decree of Infallibility. Lord Camoys declared that history, common sense, and his early instruction forbade him to accept the doctrine. Lord

Acton—now Professor of History at Cambridge—claimed that he could be an orthodox Romanist and yet resist the Vatican in this matter. The majority, however, accepted the doctrine.

Three months later, Mr. Gladstone issued a second pamphlet, entitled "Vaticanism: an Answer to Reproofs and Replies." In this he analyzed the arguments used by his opponents. Dr. Newman's "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk" he declared to possess the highest and most singular interest: "the work of an intellect sharp enough to cut the diamond and bright as the diamond which it cuts." Newman's secession from the Church of England, he thought, had never yet been estimated at its full measure of calamitous importance. "The ecclesiastical historian will, perhaps hereafter, judge that this secession was a much greater event than even the partial secession of John Wesley." He accepted Archbishop Manning's declared rule of civil allegiance as satisfactory, but observed that the future Cardinal had not disclaimed the right to persecute when there was the power, which had been advanced by a correspondent. Rome, he added, had now reproduced for active service doctrines of olden times which it had been hoped were abandoned, while the Pope still claimed to control the loyalty and civil duty of every convert and member of his Church. This contention, Mr. Gladstone reiterated and pressed. "And," he observed, "even in those parts of Christendom where the decrees and the present attitude of the Papal See do not produce or aggravate open broils with the civil power; by undermining moral liberty, they impair moral responsibility, and silently, in the succession of generations, if not in the lifetime of individuals, tend to emasculate the vigour of the mind." This was pretty strong language, and it was repeated in a further essay of the most elaborate character, published in the *Quarterly Review*, of January, 1875, and dealing with the speeches of Pope Pius IX. Mr. Gladstone now admitted, however, that the loyalty of the great mass of Roman Catholic Englishmen seemed to have remained untainted, and he believed it to be still in the main secure, although there was always danger to be apprehended, and interference to be dreaded, so long as the doctrine of Infallibility was maintained at Rome.

Naturally, such a strong and sustained and public denunciation of their Church estranged many Roman Catholics from his support, and even from old-time friendships. Amongst the latter was Cardinal Manning, who, in 1868, during the Irish Church battle, had come to Mr. Gladstone's aid in a rather remarkable letter—the memory of which may be appropriately revived in this place. It had been published at the time as an answer to the charge made by the *Standard* that there was some kind of an understanding between the Liberal leader and the Archbishop of Westminster. On hearing of it, Manning at once wrote to a friend:

"I beg to thank you for calling my attention to the paragraph in which an attempt is made to calumniate Mr. Gladstone by the fact that his eldest son is my godson (W. H.

Gladstone, who died in 1891). This is a mean artifice which can only damage those who use it. The fact is so. Mr. Hope-Scott and I stood sponsors to the eldest son of Mr. Gladstone about 1840. Mr. Hope-Scott and Mr. Gladstone were at Eton and Oxford together, and have been friends during a long life. My friendship with Mr. Gladstone began when we were at Oxford, about 1830. We had the same private tutor, and were in many ways brought together. From that till the year 1851 our friendship continued close and intimate. In 1851 the intercourse of our friendship was suspended by the act demanded of me by my conscience in submitting to the Catholic Church. We ceased to correspond, and for more than twelve years we never met. In the last year, public and official duties have renewed our communications. I have been compelled to communicate with many public men in successive Governments, and, among others, with Mr. Gladstone; with this only difference—of the others most were either strangers or but slightly known—Mr. Gladstone was and is the man whose friendship has been to me one of the most cherished and valued in my life. To found on this an insinuation for raising the no-popery cry, or suspicion of Mr. Gladstone's fidelity to his own religious convictions, is as unmanly, base, and false as the Florence telegram, in which the same political party, for the same political ends, united Mr. Gladstone's name with mine last summer. . . . I cannot conclude this letter without adding that a friendship of thirty-eight years, close and intimate till 1851 in no common degree, enables me to bear witness that a mind of greater integrity or more transparent truth, less capable of being swayed by faction and party, and more protected from all such baseness, even by the fault of indignant impatience of insincerity and selfishness in public affairs, than Mr. Gladstone's, I have never known."

But sentiments so warm as these could not be long estranged from their object, and this new break in the friendship of two men who possessed many qualities in common, did not last for more than a year or two. Writing after the Cardinal's death, January 25th, 1892, Mr. Gladstone dwelt upon this closeness of intimacy in almost pathetic language: "First," he declared, "there was a mere acquaintance of two undergraduates at Oxford, which lay wholly on the surface. Then, after an interval, a very close and intimate friendship of somewhere about fifteen years, founded entirely on interests of religion and the Church. Then came his change, which was simultaneous with that of my second, and, perhaps, yet even closer friend, Hope-Scott. Altogether, it was the severest blow which ever befel me. In a late letter the Cardinal termed it a quarrel; but in my reply, I told him it was not a quarrel but a death; and that was the truth. Since then there have been vicissitudes. But I am quite certain that to the last his personal feeling never changed; and I believe, also, that he kept a promise made in 1851 to remember me before God at the most solemn moments—a promise which I greatly valued."

Such letters form a charming glimpse of the real natures of men, even in the midst of that sternest of all strife—religious controversy. But Mr. Gladstone's whole life and writings are permeated with this genuine religious feeling. Despite mistakes in policy, or even in principle, despite many human errors of omission and commission, he stands to-day as a great example of conscientious Christian character. His conception of Christianity is lofty in its origin; noble in its expression. Faith in the Deity is to him a very real thing. Speaking to the students at Edinburgh, in 1865, he referred to "the Divine forethought, working from afar, in many places and through many generations, which so adjusts beforehand the acts and the affairs of men, as to let them all converge upon a single point, namely, upon that redemption of the world, by God made Man, in which all the rays of His glory are concentrated, and from which they pour forth a flood of healing light even over the darkest and saddest places of creation."

His belief in the holiness of the Christian marriage has been steadily reiterated in Parliament and before the world during half a century. To him it was "the most powerful of all the social instruments which the Almighty has put into use for the education of the race." And it ought to be correspondingly sacred. He sums up his faith in this regard by describing Christian morals as an "entire system covering the whole life, nature, and experience of man," and as being broadly distinguished, by "their rich, complete, and searching character," from any other forms of moral teaching extant in the world. Religion, Mr. Gladstone feels, should be a matter of daily life. In his article upon "The Impregnable Rock of the Holy Scriptures," he declares that "the Christian faith and the Holy Scriptures arm us with the means of neutralizing and repelling the assults of evil in and from ourselves. Mists may rest upon the surrounding landscape, but

"I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step's enough for me."

Speculation which is purposeless is, to his mind, irreverent; and "irreverent speculation on the doings and designs of God, by those who believe in Him, is itself a sin."

In his famous first book, he claimed that "a statesman must be a worshipping man"; and there is no doubt that his long after career pointed a personal moral and adorned the early precept. And, even in the midst of his most intense controversies, he seems to have grasped at the good which might underlie much evil. Writing on "Italy and her Church," in 1875, Mr. Gladstone pointed out that through, and behind, and beneath the dense medium of the Roman Court, "its worldly tactics, its subtle, constant, and enslaving pressure, they see the religion of the country; that power which chastens and trains the heart, which consolidates society, which, everywhere, replaces force with love; our guide in life, our stay and our illuminator in the dark precincts of the grave."

He is a firm believer in the physical, mental, moral, as well as religious, value of the Sabbath. So lately as March, 1895, in a magazine article, he declares that though the citadel of Christianity is besieged all round its circuit in these days of doubt and difficulty, yet each Lord's day morning the

Christian is "born into a new climate, a new atmosphere; and in that new atmosphere (so to speak), by the law of a renovated nature, the lungs and heart of the Christian life should spontaneously and continuously drink in the vital air." While, therefore, he considers that the service of God should be an unceasing service, yet he recognizes that worldly conditions necessitate much time being given to other objects. "So the grace and compassion of our Lord have rescued from the open ground of worldly life a portion of that area, and have made upon it a vineyard seated on a very fruitful hill, and have fenced it in with the privilege . . . of a direct contact with spiritual things."

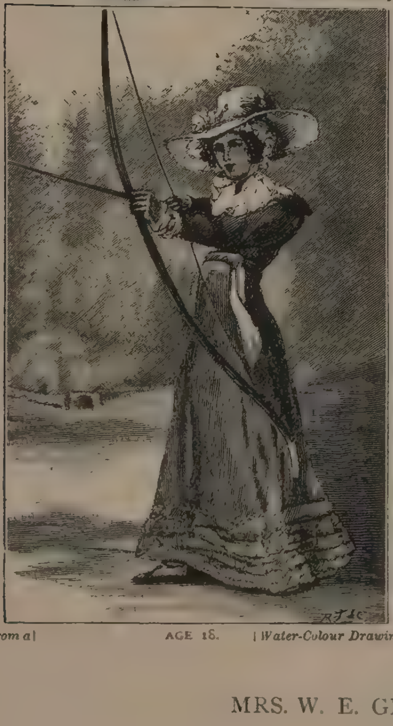
Similarly lofty is Mr. Gladstone's conception of the value of the Bible in human life and every day action. In a recent preface to a Biblical history, he asks: "Who doubts that, times without number, particular portions of Scripture find their way to the human soul as if embassies from on high, each with its own commission of comfort, of guidance, or of warning? What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? What profession, what position is not daily and hourly enriched by those words which repetition never weakens, which carry with them now, as in the days of their first utterance, the freshness of youth and immortality?"

But quotations of this nature could be found to fill volumes. Every branch of Christian life, and morals, and conduct, and conviction, has been studied and dealt with by this man of many and intense interests. Through it all runs a high and noble ideal. Much time he has, of course, devoted to strictly controversial ecclesiasticism, and much attention has been given to the consideration of his own fondly-regarded Church of England. Perhaps, however, in concluding this sketch of religious discussion and personal views, nothing could be more appropriate than an appeal for Christian unity, written by Mr. Gladstone in his "Chapter of Autobiography":

> "Christianity has wrought itself into the public life of fifteen hundred years. Precious truths, and the laws of relative right, and the brotherhood of man, such as the wisdom of heathenism scarcely dreamed of and could never firmly grasp, the Gospel has made to be part of our common inheritance, common as the sunlight that warms us, and as the air we breathe. Sharp though our divisions in belief may be, they have not cut so deep as to prevent, or as perceptibly to impair, the recognition of these great guides and fences of moral action. It is far better for us to trust to the operation of these our common principles and feelings, and to serve our Maker together in that wherein we are at one, rather than in aiming at a standard theoretically higher, to set out with a breach of the great Commandment, which forms the groundwork of all relative duties, and to refuse to do as we would be done by."

AGE 4.
From a Water-Colour Drawing.

From a Painting AGE 45.



From a AGE 18. *Water-Colour Drawing.*

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Mendelssohn

MRS. W. E. GLADSTONE.

JOHN GEORGE DOUGLAS SUTHERLAND CAMPBELL,
MARQUESS OF LORNE,

Governor-General of Canada, 1878-83.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE EASTERN STORM-CLOUD.

THE revival of the Eastern Question, in 1876, did not come as a surprise to the statesmen of Europe. With a despotic and unprincipled government such as that of Turkey; with various provinces, under the nominal sovereignty of the Porte, longing to be free from its control; with the constant play of cross-purposes and diplomatic intrigue amongst the Russian and Austrian agents; with various ill-designed spheres of influence divided between different European powers; with Moslems and Greeks, Protestants and Catholics, in a condition of seething jealousy, distrust, and restlessness; with Russia and England, Austria and France, looking on with anxiety or ambition, as the case might be; it was really marvellous that any degree of peace had been maintained during the twenty years of uncertainty and disturbance which had followed the Crimean war.

An ever certain factor in the politics of Turkey was the Russian Emperor and Government. To the Czar of all the Russias, whether it was Peter the Great, or Nicholas, or Alexander, the Slavs seemed to ever stand upon the threshold of the morning, waiting for the sun to break over the Russian fleet in the Golden Horn, the Russian flag flying over Constantinople, and the Russian ships in the Mediterranean. It had always been a complex question for Great Britain to deal with. The Turks were never popular in England. Their bravery was admitted, but so was their cruelty and bitter bigotry. Their usefulness as a sort of policeman for Europe upon the shores of the Black Sea and around the walls of the City of the Crescent was not disputed, but their barbarism, ignorance, and misgovernment were proverbial. Still, they remained a bulwark against the much-feared and really formidable power of the north.

Russia, in 1854, in 1876, and even in later years, was, to Englishmen, an object of mystery, of alarm, and distrust. Her despotism, which enabled the Czar to strike at will, where and when he liked; her vastness, her frightful climate, and her brave, barbaric people, made reprisals always difficult, and had beaten Napoleon at Moscow, as they had almost defeated England at Sebastopol; her large and greatly exaggerated military force; her constant expansion and acquisition of territory; her supposed designs upon India, and hostility to England—all combined to keep alive British mistrust and British antagonism. So that while many, and perhaps the majority, of Englishmen disliked the Turk, they detested the Russian.

Hence, it required the addition of strong Imperial sentiment or self-interest to turn the scale for or against intervention. In 1877, it became a contest, primarily, between two men; secondly, between a desire to prevent Russian extension and a sentimental desire to punish Turkish cruelty. Genuine sympathy with either Russia or Turkey in the great conflict which followed could hardly be considered a factor. Apart from the remarkable duel between the Conservative Premier and the man who still represented, and really led, the virile forces of Liberalism, the events which ensued mainly turned upon the question whether Constantinople should become Russian or should remain European. Turkey was, in any case, only the nominal possessor.

What a place in history that city of domes and minarets, of mosques and harems, has held! It was once the capital of the rival empire to that of Rome. It has been the seat of Greek faith, and the home and centre of Eastern Christianity. It has been the source of the Moslem torrents which once swept over Europe, and has become the sacred fane of Mahomet and the seat of the most powerful of Eastern religions. "Constantinople," muttered Napoleon, "is the empire of the world." "Constantinople," said Peter the Great, "is the key of my street door, and I must have it." "If Constantinople be taken," wrote the Duke of Wellington, "the world must be reconstructed." "The Eastern Question," declared the Earl of Derby, "is the question of who shall have Constantinople."

To Great Britain the problem was one of complicated importance. Russia in control of the Bosphorus meant a distinct menace to Egypt and the Suez Canal route to India. Russia in control of Constantinople meant the Black Sea established as a Russian lake, and the sweeping of a new naval power into the Mediterranean. The falling of the great centre of Mahommedan faith into the hands of England's traditional enemy involved a tremendous turmoil amongst the 50,000,000 Mahommedans in India, and a great loss of British prestige and power. All these things had been felt, though in a lesser degree, during the Crimean war, and Mr. Gladstone had properly taken high ground in favour of maintaining the Turkish position as an independent power. But he had also supported the Russian right to interfere on behalf of the oppressed Greek Christians within the Porte's dominions.

While, however, the aggression of Russia in 1854, accompanied by duplicity and every evidence of a restless, dangerous ambition, was sufficiently great and unprovoked to deserve opposition from England, its action in 1877 appeared to him on the side of right and humanity. The cruelties perpetrated by the Turks in 1876 were felt by the great compassionate soul of a man, who was sometimes a Christian first and a statesman afterwards, to demand instant punishment, and even summary ejection of the national criminals from Europe. The Bulgarian massacres were to him so terrible as to do away with all other considerations of international balance, or future menace to possible British interests.

But this is anticipating a little. Early in 1875, disturbances began in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As with Greece, and, in other days, Bulgaria, Roumelia, Crete, and Servia, men of antagonistic race and religion could not endure the rough-shod autocracy of Turkish pashas, and the barbarous rule of Turkish soldiers. And, as had happened before, foreign intervention was expected and invited. There can be little doubt that secret sympathy, if not substantial aid, came to the insurgents from Austria. On the general principle that any trouble in Turkey was likely to help forward the day of Russian domination, there is equally little doubt that the Slavs scattered through various states were stirred up by emissaries from the great Slav empire of the north. Finally, Count Andrassy, the Austrian Foreign Minister, drew up a declaration in which Germany and Russia joined, to the effect that unless Turkey carried out its oft-pledged reforms the insurrection would become a general outbreak, and would involve European intervention, and more or less serious results to the Porte. After a good deal of delay, Lord Derby agreed to the note on behalf of Great Britain. Turkey made promises, but did nothing.

Then came the Berlin Memorandum, proposed by the three Imperial powers, and notifying Turkey that if it did not carry out the accepted suggestions of the Andrassy note, further measures—which meant force of arms—would be called for. In this the British Government refused to join, evidently not wishing to give Russia a future excuse for individual intervention, and, although, in a sense, public property, it was never presented to the Porte. Then followed, in May, 1876, the insurrection in Bulgaria, and the infamous massacres by the Bashi-Bazouks. The rebellion was soon suppressed. But, gradually, news began to arrive in England concerning the frightful details. The correspondent of the *Daily News* at Constantinople declared that thousands of innocent men, women, and children had been slaughtered; that more than sixty villages had been wiped out of existence; that the most terrible crimes of violence had been committed; and a whole fertile and beautiful district laid in ruins. Girls and women were alleged to have been burned to death, and outrages of the most frightful character perpetrated.

A little later, the reports indicated that something like 12,000 persons had perished in the Philippopolis district, while the details of the Batak massacre were dreadful beyond description. In this case, some twelve hundred people took refuge in a solid church building which resisted all efforts to burn it from without. Ultimately, the Bashi-Bazouks got upon the roof, tore off the tiles, and threw burning pieces of wood and rags, dipped in blazing oil, upon the wretched, seething mass of humanity below. At last the doors were broken in, and the massacre completed.

Mr. Disraeli tried to calm the rising tide of excitement and prevent it playing into the hands of the ever-ready Russian. He pointed out that official reports from Turkey did not yet verify the worst of these cruelties. He urged that, in any case, the perpetrators were not Turks, but irregular Circassian soldiery—men who had been driven from their mountainous homes by Russia and given room to live in various Turkish provinces. He deprecated undue denunciation of the Porte as an encouragement to that last great aggressive effort of Russian ambition, which now seemed imminent, and pointed out that the Czar's pretended sympathy for the Christians of Turkey did not come well from the head of a Government which had given no mercy to the wretched Christians of Poland, and had nothing but cruelty and oppression for the Jews of its own country.

Events now moved rapidly. Servia had joined Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria in the general struggle with Turkey, and they were all more or less badly beaten. Debates in the House of Commons became fiery and frequent, and, in July, 1876, Mr. Disraeli announced that the British fleet had been ordered to Besika Bay—not to protect the Turkish Empire, but to guard the interests of the British Empire. Shortly afterwards, the Premier made his last speech in the Commons, and retired to the Upper House as Earl of Beaconsfield. But Mr. Gladstone did not deem the Ministerial statements about Turkey either sufficient or satisfactory. He believed that England was really supporting Turkey against the insurgent provinces, and practically condoning the Bulgarian massacres. Hence the issue of his famous pamphlet, entitled "Bulgarian Horrors, and the Question in the East." This fierce onslaught upon the Turks and the British Government had an immediate and immense circulation, and it certainly spoke with no uncertain voice. The author urged that three great objects should be kept in view by England—first, the desolating cruelties and misrule which characterized Turkish action in Bulgaria; second, a provision against future outrages by removing Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria from the control of Turkey; third, the redemption of English honour, which had been marred by the recent policy of its Government.

"Let us insist," he said, "that our Government, which has been working in one direction, shall work in the other, and shall apply all its vigour to concur with the other States of Europe in obtaining the extinction of the Turkish executive power in Bulgaria. Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely, by carrying off themselves. Their Zaptiehs and their Mudirs, their Bunbashis and their Yurbachis, their Kaimakains and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall, I hope, clear out of the province they have desolated and profaned." He went on in scathing language to analyze and describe the "loathsome tyranny" and the "intolerable misgovernment" which had of late years been exhibited by

Turkey. Referring to this stirring indictment of a foreign nation and a powerful Home Government, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, in his "Life of Lord Beaconsfield"—which, though marred by political hostility to its subject, is clever and striking in style—renders a marked tribute to Mr. Gladstone:

> "From that moment forward he has stood forth as the protagonist of the Christian cause in the East. In advocating that cause he has had to endure bitter adversity, he has had to pass through a whirlwind of vituperation; from scarcely any variety of charge that can be brought against him as a statesman or a man has he been held free. He has been accused of the high crime of treason and the low weakness of personal jealousy; he has been described at once as a most calculating conspirator, and a trifler of hysterical impulsiveness. Cynics have sneered at him; scribes have attempted to write him down; mobs have hissed at him. But he can bear within his bosom a consciousness that may make his heart swell the prouder because of those displays of unscrupulous and unfeeling hate."

A few days after the publication of his pamphlet, Mr. Gladstone went down to address his constituents on Blackheath. That speech stands out as one of his greatest. It was of that fervent, vivid, powerful, and yet solemn type of oration which no man can deliver more than a few times in his life, and then only if he be honestly permeated with enthusiasm in what he believes to be a noble and lofty cause. It partook of the nature referred to by James Russell Lowell upon another occasion:

> "Every word that he speaks has been fiercely furnaced
> In the blast of a life that has struggled in earnest.
> His periods fall on you stroke after stroke,
> Like the blows of a lumberer felling an oak."

Mr. Gladstone was received with enthusiasm by the vast mass of people. But the reception was nothing to the spontaneous expression of feeling which gradually and continuously rose from the multitude as they were swayed hither and thither by the impassioned eloquence of the speaker. At one point he referred to the massacre at Glencoe, the atrocities of Badajoz, the revolt of Cephalonia, the recent troubles in Jamaica, and then, with scorn and indignation depicted in every tone and word and gesture, declared that "to compare these proceedings to what we are now dealing with is an insult to the common sense of Europe. They may constitute a dark page in British history, but if you could concentrate the whole of that page, or every one of them, into a single point and a single spot, it would not be worthy to appear upon one of the pages that will hereafter consign to everlasting infamy the proceedings of the Turks in Bulgaria."

As to the future of Turkey—and here Mr. Gladstone's voice rang out with the clearness of a clarion and the power of a prophet of old—"you shall receive your regular tribute, retain your titular sovereignty, your empire shall not be invaded; but never again as the years roll on in their course—so far as it is in our power to determine—never again shall the hand of violence be raised by you, never again shall the flood-gates of lust be open to you, never again shall the dire refinements of cruelty be devised by you for the sake of making mankind miserable." Then he outlined his policy in the premises. It was, in a word, the united action of the powers of Europe, backed up and urged on by the special co-operation of England and Russia. "I am," said the speaker, "far from supposing—I am not such a dreamer as to suppose that Russia, more than any other country, is exempt from selfishness and ambition. But she has within her, like other countries, the pulse of humanity. . . . Upon the concord and hearty co-operation of England and Russia depends a good settlement of this question. Their power is immense. The power of Russia by land for acting for these countries as against Turkey is perfectly resistless; the power of England by sea is scarcely less important."

And, finally, he maintained that the British Government should proclaim that not a man, nor a ship, nor a boat would aid or co-operate with Turkey until atonement had been made for the Bulgarian atrocities; until punishment had descended upon the criminals; until justice had been vindicated. This oration proved the keynote of a prolonged campaign, as well as furnishing an historic illustration of the power of speech. Mr. W. T. Stead, who heard the remarkable deliverance, described it at the time in words which bring vividly before us both the man and his appearance:

> "Mr. Gladstone is not tall, neither is he stout. He is the contrary—spare and somewhat wiry. But it was difficult to think of his body when looking at his face. Such a marvellously expressive face I do not ever remember to have seen. Every muscle seemed alive, every inch of it seemed to speak. It was in perpetual motion. Now it rippled over with a genial smile, then the smile disappeared, and the horror expressed by his words reflected on his countenance, and then again his high-wrought feelings gleamed out from his flashing eye, and the listener might have imagined he was hearing the outpourings of one of the prophets who brought the message of Jehovah to Israel. A benevolent face, too, it was; one from which the kindliness enthroned in the heart looks out upon you through the eyes, and leavens every feature with such mildness and sweetness that it is difficult to conceive that he whose face rivals the tenderness of that of a woman has proved himself the best man upon the field, not upon one occasion, but upon hundreds, whenever in the halls of St. Stephen's the signal has been given for battle."

Lord Beaconsfield soon after replied at Aylesbury, and, in a speech which showed how warm the struggle was getting between the two rivals, admitted that, for the moment, his policy was unpopular; declared it, however, to be none the less patriotic and honourable; denounced the conduct of his opponents as worse than that of the Turks; and condemned the "designing politicians who take advantage of sublime sentiments and apply them for the furtherance of sinister ends." A little later, a Conference of the Powers was held at Constantinople to discuss measures of settlement, and to this Lord Salisbury was sent on behalf of England. While it was being arranged, a great gathering had been called, on December 8th, at St. James' Hall, to discuss the Eastern Question, or, in plain English, to denounce the Government. Lord Shaftesbury presided, and addresses were delivered by Mr. Gladstone, Canon Liddon, Mr.—afterwards Sir G. O.—Trevelyan, Mr. Henry Fawcett, and Mr. E. A. Freeman.

The Conference, after long discussions, closed with the final presentation to Turkey of two propositions—the appointment of an International Commission, nominated by Europe, without executive powers; and the selection of Governors-General of the Christian provinces by the Sultan for five years, and with the approval of the guaranteeing governments. The demands were, however, rejected by the Porte as contrary to its "integrity, independence, and dignity." During the Parliamentary recess which followed, early in 1877, Mr. Gladstone spoke at a number of places, and freely declared the failure of the Conference to be the result of Turkish confidence in the support of the English Government, and claimed that in giving such an impression to the Porte the Ministry was defying and opposing the public opinion of England. In the House, after it met on the 8th of February, he repeated his views, and urged that, as the Crimean war had practically established Turkey in its position of comparative independence, Great Britain, through that event, had become involved in the responsibility of punishing what had recently occurred, and preventing it from happening again.

On April 24th, Russia, which had announced itself ready to intervene independently, before the Conference at Constantinople, now declared war, and gave as its reason the Porte's refusal of guarantees for reforms, and the failure of the Conference. On the 1st of May, England, France, and Italy issued proclamations of neutrality, and six days after Mr. Gladstone commenced a great debate in the House, by moving resolutions which denounced the conduct of Turkey in relation to the massacres in Bulgaria, and declared that country to have forfeited all claim to moral or material support. He reviewed the situation from his frequently proclaimed standpoint, alleged that the Government was still giving Turkey a "moral support," denounced anew the cruelties in Bulgaria, claimed that the Crimean war had made England partially responsible for the Christians of that Empire, and wound up with one of his most sustained and eloquent perorations:

> "Sir, there were other days when England was the hope of freedom. Wherever in the world a high aspiration was entertained or a noble blow was struck, it was to England that the eyes of the oppressed were always turned—to this favourite, to this darling home of so much privilege, and so much happiness, where the people that had built up a noble edifice for themselves would, it was well known, be ready to do what in them lay to

secure the benefit of the same inestimable boon for others. . . . There is now before the world a glorious prize. A portion of those unhappy people are still as yet making an effort to retrieve what they have lost so long, but have not ceased to love and to desire. I speak of those in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Another portion—a band of heroes, such as the world has rarely seen—stand on the rocks of Montenegro, and are ready now, as they have ever been during the four hundred years of their exile from their fertile plains, to sweep down from their fastnesses, and meet the Turks at any odds for the re-establishment of justice and of peace in those countries. Another portion still, the 5,000,000 of Bulgarians, cowed and beaten down to the ground, hardly venturing to look upwards even to their Father in heaven, have extended their hands to you; they have sent you their petition; they have prayed to you for help and protection. They have told you that they do not seek alliance with Russia, or with any foreign power, but that they seek to be delivered from an intolerable burden of woe and shame—the greatest that exists on God's earth. The removal of that load is a great and noble prize. It is a prize well worth competing for. It is not yet too late to try and win it."

But no power of speech could break through the ranks of the Government majority. The debate lasted five days, and proved the House to be satisfied upon the whole with Ministerial declarations in favour of neutrality. And Mr. Gladstone found himself unable to carry his own party entirely with him—the support given being, in many cases, cold and limited. In the end he obtained only 223 votes to 354. Towards the close of the session he spoke in Birmingham upon the Eastern Question, and thanked the Nonconformists for the support they were giving him. Shortly afterwards he was elected on a strict party vote—as is the frequent custom in British universities—Lord Rector of Glasgow University, by a large majority over Sir Stafford Northcote, and in succession to Lord Beaconsfield. Meanwhile the Russo-Turkish war was progressing, and it must be said that the Turks won more liking in this their day of bitter adversity than any number of the most brilliant successes would have made possible. The splendid bravery of Osman Pasha, the steady and sustained courage of the troops under most unfavourable circumstances, the cruelties and even atrocities of the Russian irregular soldiery, all combined to effect somewhat of a revulsion in English popular opinion.

Then came the fall of Kars and Plevna, the Russian capture of the Schipka Pass, the advance upon Constantinople, the meeting of the Peace Commissioners, the Treaty of San Stefano on March 3rd, and the practical partition of Turkey under pressure of Russian guns bearing upon its historic capital. For two months prior to the signature of that treaty, however, it had become evident that matters were in a critical condition, and that Russia intended to exact, not only her full pound of flesh, but much more than it would be wise for England or Europe to permit. Parliament was called early in January, 1878, and a few days afterwards it became known that the British fleet had been ordered to the Dardanelles, and that the Government proposed to ask the House for a war credit of $30,000,000. The air immediately teemed with rumours, and the excitement became intense. Lord Beaconsfield declared his policy to be one of prevention, rather than attempts at a cure which might be too late, and asked the country for its support at a critical juncture. To a certain extent it was given, though Mr. Gladstone came to the front again, and, speaking at Oxford, on January 30th, declared that "his purpose had been, to the best of his power, day and night, week by week, month by month, to counterwork what he believed to be the purposes of that man."

In Parliament, he vehemently opposed the vote of credit, and was greatly aided in his opposition by the retirement from the Government of Lord Carnarvon, followed, a little later, by that of Lord Derby. The vote, he declared, was not needed, would not strengthen the hands of the Ministry, and was unwise upon the verge of a Conference. It was, however, ultimately granted by the large majority of 328 to 124, the lack of unity amongst the Liberals being shown by the abstention of Lord Hartington and other party leaders from the division. The Conference to which Mr. Gladstone alluded was not yet obtained, and it soon became apparent that Russia would resist any practical European intervention or any genuine reconsideration of the question which she had taken it upon herself to settle. The treaty of San Stefano, in March, of course, brought matters to a crisis, and showed that all Russia intended was that the Berlin Congress should be a sort of international court to register approval of Russian policy. It was even proposed that England should be excluded from the meeting altogether.

Lord Beaconsfield's answer was short and sharp. On the 1st of April the Reserves were called out by a Royal message, and a little later it was announced that a large contingent of Indian troops was on the way to Malta from England's Eastern empire, and that a million more would follow, if required. This was sufficient, and on June 13th the Congress met in order to consider and revise the Russo-Turkish Treaty, and arrange the Eastern Question. The Premier and the Marquess of Salisbury attended as British representatives, but, before leaving for Berlin, made a secret arrangement with Turkey by which it was agreed that, if the worst came, England would protect the Porte against further aggression. In return, the Sultan promised to introduce necessary reforms, to protect the Christian populations, and to cede Cyprus to England. A month later the Congress was closed, and the Treaty of Berlin signed. By this memorable measure, the Balkan mountains were to form the southern frontier of Bulgaria, and to Austria was given the task of occupying Bosnia and Herzegovina on behalf of Europe. Montenegro received the seaport of Antivari and a considerable accession of territory. It was of this brave race that Tennyson not long before had sung:

"O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years.
Great Tzernagora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers."

Servia's frontier was enlarged; Greece extended; and Silistria and Magnolia were to be ceded by Russia to Roumania. In return, Russia was to receive a portion of Bessarabia, and Batoum, Kars, and Ardahan, together with a war indemnity of $230,000,000. Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury were received with the most unusual acclamations on their return home. From Dover to Downing Street the Ministers were cheered with unfailing enthusiasm and by an almost continuous multitude—one portion of which, in accordance with some street rumour, ecstatically hailed the Premier as Duke of Cyprus. Speaking from the Foreign Office window, Lord Beaconsfield declared, in now historic words, that they had brought back peace with honour, and on the 27th of July following, at a banquet in Knightsbridge given by the Conservative members of both Houses of Parliament, he described Mr. Gladstone, in equally famous words, as "a sophistical rhetorician inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity, and gifted with an egotistical imagination that can at all times command an interminable and inconsistent series of arguments to malign his opponents and glorify himself."

Lord Salisbury, in following the Premier, delivered a speech which is interesting as not only giving the Conservative side of a complex question, but as showing the harmony of sentiment which existed between Lord Beaconsfield and his future successor. He declared that the Government, in the long and critical period now ended, had been compelled to submit to every species of calumny, misconstruction, and abuse. At moments when it was of the most vital importance for England to appear united and to be in earnest, every nerve had been strained by their great opponent "to make England seem infirm of purpose and impotent in action." He summarized the negotiations and the policy of the Government in the following words:

> "They have felt that, however imperfectly, we were striving to pick up the thread—the broken thread—of England's old Imperial position. For a short time there have been men eminent in public affairs who have tried to persuade you that all the past history of England was a mistake, that the duty and interest of England were to confine herself solely to her own insular affairs, to cultivate commerce, accumulate riches, and not, as was said, to entangle herself in foreign politics. Now, it seems a small answer to these men to say that even for their own low purposes their policy was mistaken. The commerce of a great commercial country like this will only flourish—history attests it again and again—under the shadow of empire, and those who give up empire to make commerce prosper will end by losing both."

Amid the applause and laughter raised by his sarcastic description of Mr. Gladstone, the honours conferred upon him by the Queen, and a sudden wave of intense popularity, Lord Beaconsfield had now reached the acme of his career, the apotheosis of his Imperial policy. It was, at the same time, Mr. Gladstone's season of deepest unpopularity. But for him it was the darkness before the dawn. He had opposed every branch of the Government's policy, and especially the bringing of Indian troops to Malta, and the Cyprus Convention. The former action he considered a dangerous abrogation of the Constitution, and the power of bringing masses of Indian soldiers from the east to the west without leave from Parliament to be a source of grave apprehension to all lovers of English liberty. The latter arrangement was an "insane Convention," and the promise to defend Turkey was—as might be imagined—characterized in most unmeasured terms.

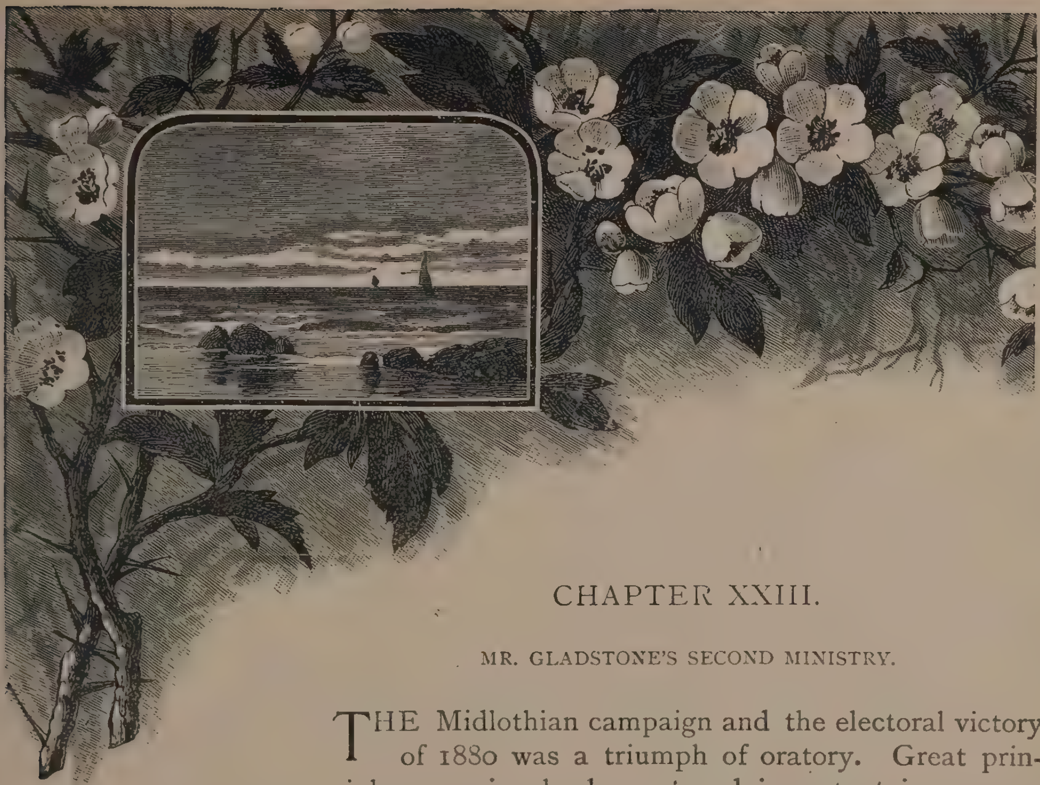
During July, a remarkable debate came up in the House over Lord Hartington's motion of censure upon the Government for not having done more for Greece; for having guaranteed the integrity of Turkey in Asia; and for having entered into undefined engagements without the knowledge or sanction of Parliament. This, of course, brought up the whole mass of problems and policies included in the phrase "Eastern Question." It was memorable for a speech from Mr. Gladstone, which a keen observer and listener—Mr. H. W. Lucy—has described as one of his four great orations. And it was also remarkable for bringing into line behind the speaker—for almost the first time since the dark days of 1874—almost the whole of the Liberal party. Amid a cannonade of cheers from the Liberals, such as he had been for some time unaccustomed to hear in the House, he launched into a strong and fierce indictment of the Ministry, the whole policy of the previous years, and the Berlin Treaty.

When the Government had tried to do something for liberty, he declared that they had really done the reverse; when the Slavs of Turkey had called for help from Russia, they had obtained it; but when the Greeks of Turkey cried to England for support, they had been thrown over. The cession of Cyprus he claimed to have violated both the letter and spirit of the Treaty of Paris in 1856; while the Government had in many ways systematically and steadily derogated in its policy from the dignity and rights of Parliament. He concluded his speech as follows:

> "First, we have the setting up of British interests, not real, but imaginary. Then we have the prosecution of those supposed British interests by means of strange and unheard-of schemes, such as never occurred even to the imagination of statesmen of other days. Then we have . . . those schemes prosecuted in a manner which appears, as I conceive, to indicate a very deficient regard to the authority of the law of Europe, and to that just respect which is due to all foreign Powers. Then we have associated

with this grievous lack a disregard, a neglect—it may, perhaps, even be said a contempt—for the rights of Parliament. Lastly, along with all this, we create a belief that the result of those operations of the Government, so unsound in their foundation, so wild in their aims, is likely to be an increase of responsibility, with no addition, but rather a diminution of strength; a loss of respect abroad; a shock to constitutional instincts and practices at home; and also an augmentation of the burdens which are borne with such exemplary patience by a too confiding people."

The motion was, of course, rejected by the unbroken, and, indeed, triumphant, Ministerial phalanx. But Mr. Gladstone was now about to appeal from Parliament to the people, and in the succeeding year he commenced his memorable Midlothian tour. Lord Beaconsfield had, indeed, missed the golden moment of possible triumph at the polls; Mr. Gladstone during two succeeding years of arduous campaigning prepared the way for his own great success in 1880.



CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. GLADSTONE'S SECOND MINISTRY.

THE Midlothian campaign and the electoral victory of 1880 was a triumph of oratory. Great principles were involved, many and important issues were thrown into the fight, but the result turned in the end upon the marvellous speeches and personal oratorical influence of Mr. Gladstone. For three years he had carried on a fierce and aggressive war against Lord Beaconsfield. Right into the heart of the enemies' camp he had penetrated with passionate protests against the foreign policy of the Conservative party. Sometimes aided by others, but oftenest alone, he had borne aloft the banner of the Christian cause in Turkey—as he believed it to be with all his heart and soul—until at last depressed Liberalism had become inspired with some of his own confidence, and its former leader had again become the dominating and popular power in its counsels and policy.

But it was in Midlothian, which he had resolved to take from the powerful control of the Duke of Buccleugh and add to the Liberal column, that Mr. Gladstone put the crowning touch upon these great efforts. And to appreciate his enthusiasm, his versatility, his courage, and uncompromising determination in this struggle, it is not necessary to take the partisan line, or share in the partisan feeling which has marked so many of the memoirs of that time. There was then in England, and there will be for a prolonged period in the future, two distinct schools of thought and policy. The record of the preceding years has indicated this, but it may be well to point it out once more. Lord Beaconsfield and the Tory party believed in Turkey as a necessary barrier against Russia.

Mr. Gladstone and his followers thought that Turkish cruelty cried to Heaven for punishment, and favoured the renunciation of all responsibility. The interests of England in the East were paramount with one party; the conscience of England as a Christian power was paramount with the other. The crimes of Turkey were to one party all important; the ambition of Russia was to the other a main consideration.

Looking back now it is reasonably clear that Lord Beaconsfield was the statesman of the moment. Mr. Gladstone the great moral crusader. The latter had been all on fire with personal conviction and energy; the former had sat in his room at Downing Street, and handled the situation with the keenness and calmness of one who moves the pawns upon a chess board. Both were in a sense right, but their points of view were hopelessly apart and distinct. So with the unfortunate war in Afghanistan, which arose in 1879, and for which the Beaconsfield Government received such severe handling and caustic criticism from the great Liberal and his followers. In treating it as he did, Mr. Gladstone was consistent and right. He did not believe that Russia at that time was aggressively ambitious regarding Afghanistan, and in secret association with Shere Ali, the Ameer and chief of its turbulent tribes. In later years—during the Pendjeh incident—he found that Russia was Russia still, and occasionally required a strong hand and a sudden check.

But Lord Beaconsfield, in sending a British mission to Cabul; in resenting the refusal to receive it when Russian emissaries were openly received; in declaring war and winning the Peace of Gaudamak; was surely carrying out a policy susceptible of praise as well as blame. He felt a profound distrust of Russia, and was naturally anxious to prevent Afghanistan from falling, through wile or force, into hostile hands, which, as Lord Napier of Magdala had lately declared, could then so easily "deal a fatal blow at our Empire." A lover of peace, however, could very properly say, as Mr. Gladstone in effect did say, that there was no overt action on the part of either Russia or Afghanistan; that a small power cannot really "insult" a great one; and that war should never have been entered upon with a restless, disunited people, who were best left to their own strong love of independence and vague ideas of national, or rather tribal, coherence.

But, of course, his denunciation of the policy was much more severe than this. It was declared to be part of a general Imperial scheme which was ending in bluster and blunder. It was a guilty and unjust war, caused by the ambition of the English Government for more territory and greater prestige. It was altogether unnecessary, and the proposed scientific frontier was a reversal of the past policy of the greatest of Indian Viceroys. It was, in short, a probable repetition of the lamentable events of 1841 in Afghanistan. In a farewell speech to his constituents at Geenwich, on November 30th, 1878, and within twelve months of his memorable speeches in Midlothian, Mr. Gladstone declared that "It is written in the eternal laws of the universe of God that sin shall be followed by suffering. An unjust war is a tremendous sin. . . . The day will arrive when the people of England will discover that national injustice is the surest road to national downfall."

This was followed up by an equally vigorous speech in Parliament. He maintained that Russia should have been called to account, and not Afghanistan, that the diplomatic part of the matter had been grossly mismanaged, and that Lord Lytton was not fit for the high place which he held. And then came a powerful peroration:

> "The sword is drawn, and misery is to come upon that unhappy country again. The struggle may, perhaps, be short. God grant that it may be short! God grant that it may not be sharp! But you, having once entered upon it, cannot tell whether it will be short or long. You have again brought in devastation, and again created a necessity which, I hope, will be met by other men, with other minds, in happier days; that other Viceroys and other Governments, but other Viceroys especially—such men as Canning, Lawrence, Mayo, and Northbrook—will undo this evil work in which you are now engaged. It cannot be undone in a moment, although the torch of a madman may burn down an edifice which it has taken the genius, the skill, the labour, and the lavish prodigality of ages to erect."

But the Government's majority of a hundred rendered all Parliamentary appeals and eloquence useless, and Mr. Gladstone, in the autumn of 1879, transferred his protests from the forum to the platform, from the House of Commons to the people. Here his oratory made him absolutely supreme. On the 25th of November, the first gun of the Midlothian campaign was heard in the Music Hall, at Edinburgh, by an immense audience. The day following he spoke at Dalkeith, in the very heart of his Ducal opponent's territory. At the Corn Exchange, Edinburgh, a little later, he addressed nearly 4,000 persons, and the representatives of over a hundred Scottish Liberal associations. Then came a speech to over 20,000 people, in the vast Waverley Market—an audience which had never yet been approached within the walls of a Scotch building. Here sixty or seventy addresses were presented from various admiring organizations.

From Edinburgh, Mr. Gladstone went to Inverkeithing, Dunfermline, and Perth; thence to Dunkeld, Aberfeldy, and Taymouth Castle; and, after rousing speeches at each place, arrived, on December 4th, at Glasgow, where on the following day he addressed the students at the University, upon assumption of the position of Lord Rector. In the evening he spoke to an immense audience of about 6,000 persons, dealing chiefly with Cyprus, the Suez Canal, India, and Afghanistan. After one or two more visits, and the receipt of innumerable deputations, he closed a campaign of two weeks, during which 70,000 persons had heard him speak. and half a million had taken some part or other in the accompanying demonstrations.

It had been a memorable effort, and when in March, 1880, Lord Beaconsfield announced the dissolution of Parliament, Mr. Gladstone went down and once more poured out a flood of oratory upon the constituency which he had determined to win. His opponent was the Earl of Dalkeith, eldest son and heir of the Duke of Buccleugh, whose whole influence was, of course, thrown into the contest. The speeches of these two Midlothian tours will long live in history. They were so vigorous, so hopeful, so impassioned, so full of contempt and scorn and invective, that they rang through the United Kingdom with all the force of assured victory; all the power of a dominating and irresistible personality. The sound of those brilliant appeals seemed to find an echo everywhere, and the watchword of "Gladstone" acted upon the hosts of Liberalism as had happened in days of old with another name and in a very different cause:

> "Press where you see my white plume shine amid the ranks of war,
> And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

What mattered occasional mistakes, or extravagances, or statements which had afterwards to be retracted! The speaker reached down to the hearts of his hearers, touched the Nonconformist conscience, and stirred up the Scotch fears of foreign complications. Perhaps also Lord Beaconsfield's inability to take a similar part in the contest contributed to the success of the campaign. He was not a platform orator in the popular sense, though a great debater and speaker, and his health was now poor. There was, in point of fact, no living man who could compete with Mr. Gladstone, unless it were John Bright—and he was fighting upon the same side. Mr. G. W. Smalley, the talented and usually fair-minded correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, has described the orator's appearance during one of these memorable speeches:

> "It is the face which will rivet your gaze; the play of features, alike delicate and powerful, and the ever-restless, far-searching glance. Never was such a tell-tale countenance. Expression after expression sweeps across it, the thought pictures itself to you almost before it is uttered; and if your eyes by chance meet his, it is a blaze of sunlight which dazzles you. Nor do the little blemishes really matter. What masters, what impresses you, and what you will carry away with you as a permanent and precious memory, is, above all things, the nobleness of presence, the beautiful dignity, the stateliness of bearing, the immense sincerity, which are visible to the eye of the most careless spectator, and which fill the hall with their influence, and place the great multitude wholly at the mercy of the one fellow-being who stands before them."

The result of the contest was a painful surprise to Lord Beaconsfield; a delightful response to Mr. Gladstone's unceasing and eloquent efforts. In the country generally, 354 Liberals were elected, 236 Conservatives, and 62 Home Rulers—a Liberal majority of 56 over the possible combination of antagonists. Mr. Gladstone was himself chosen for Midlothian by a majority of 211. The

Premier promptly resigned, and the greatest and strongest Conservative Government since the days of the Reform Bill passed into history. Mr. Gladstone was his only possible successor. His voice, his policy, his personality, had been the central and chief cause of the victory, and the Liberal party throughout the country had already hailed him as the coming Premier. But, constitutionally, he was still only a private member in the Liberal ranks, and the Queen—following constitutional precedent—called first upon Lord Hartington as leader in the Commons, and then upon Earl Granville as leader in the Lords, to form the new administration. Neither, of course, could do so, but both accepted the summons as a graceful compliment, and recommended Mr. Gladstone to Her Majesty.

The three leaders, during these negotiations, and in the preceding years of difficulty, and at times of unpleasant complication, appear, as a whole, to have kept on terms of personal friendship. Mr. Gladstone, in his trying position of forcing the party of which he was no longer leader along a line of policy which many of its chief members thought dangerous, if not desperate, had striven to avoid the offence which would be given by the making of his own personality too prominent. In October, 1879, a birthday banquet had been offered him, but declined in a letter to Mr. John Morley. "The necessities of the period, from 1876 onwards," wrote Mr. Gladstone to his friend and earnest follower in many future struggles, "have forced me into a constant activity; while I remain as desirous as heretofore to do nothing which could appear to compromise, or tend to alter, my position as a private member of the Liberal party."

But the inevitable had now come, and he was Premier once more with a great majority and a united party. With the exception of a struggle over the places to be allotted the Radicals, who had won such marked electoral successes at Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and other great towns of the north, Mr. Gladstone had little difficulty in forming his Ministry. There were plenty of able men, and many who had avowed dislike of the new Premier during his days of struggle now found the sunshine of success a very melting influence in his favour.

The new Cabinet was constituted as follows:

First Lord of the Treasury, Premier, and Chancellor of the Exchequer	Mr. Gladstone
Lord Chancellor	Lord Selborne
President of the Council	Earl Spencer
Lord Privy Seal	Duke of Argyle
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Northbrook
Secretary of State for Home Affairs	Sir William Harcourt
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs	Earl Granville
Secretary of State for War	Mr. H. C. E. Childers

Secretary of State for the Colonies	Lord Kimberley
Secretary of State for India	Lord Hartington
Chancellor, Duchy of Lancaster	Mr. Bright
President of the Board of Trade	Mr. Chamberlain
President of the Local Government Board	Mr. J. G. Dodson
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Mr. W. E. Forster

Minor, but still important, appointments were those of Sir Charles Dilke as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs; Mr. Henry Fawcett as Postmaster-General; Mr. Grant-Duff as Under-Secretary for the Colonies. Lord Cowper became Viceroy of Ireland; the Marquess of Ripon, Viceroy of India; and, in 1883, the Marquess of Lansdowne became Governor-General of Canada. In August, 1881, the Earl of Rosebery became Under Home Secretary, and, in 1885, a member of the Cabinet. Such was the general composition of the new Ministry. Its members were, as a rule, men of ability, and the majority of them had obtained ample executive experience in previous administrations. The most notable exceptions were Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke. Of the latter it is not necessary to say much, although he appeared to have, at this time, a great career before him. He was one of the darlings of a somewhat limited democracy, and apparently a force which had to be reckoned with in ability, in popularity, and in growing influence. But he has since passed as utterly out of political possibilities as though he had never been born. Mr. Chamberlain, on the other hand, has steadily risen in political power, although in a direction, and through the operation of causes, which, in 1880, would have been scouted as utterly beyond the scope of possibility. For the moment, however, he was a leader of the Radicals and a comparatively young man in politics; impetuous in some respects, but, above all things, shrewd and tactful. And, as the next five years rolled on, he gained greatly in reputation as a strong, sarcastic speaker and a probable Radical Premier of the future.

With, therefore, a fine ship, a full breeze, and apparently a prospect of fair weather, Mr. Gladstone's second Government was launched. The first storm which it encountered was the Bradlaugh controversy. Parliament met on the 29th of April, and on the third day following, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, an infidel lecturer and editor, presented himself as the choice of the people of Northampton, and asked permission to make an affirmation or declaration of allegiance instead of taking the oath. After some wrangling and technical discussions, a committee of the House was appointed to deal with the matter, and it promptly reported that Mr. Bradlaugh did not belong to the class of persons who are exempted by law from taking the usual oath. Then, on May 21st, the member for Northampton, offered to take the oath—which he did not believe in, and which he had publicly declared to be utterly meaningless. This created an unprecedented situation, and one which no one—not even the

Government—seemed to know how to handle. One thing appeared obvious, and that was that the disheartened Opposition stood to gain by a question upon which all parties were at sixes and sevens.

It was, in fact, the cause of the birth of the famous Fourth Party, and the cry which enabled Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Arthur J. Balfour, Sir John E. Gorst, and Sir Henry Wolff to make a preliminary and united canter along the Parliamentary road to prominence, and to diverse degrees of power and popularity. The struggle over the question was a prolonged and angry one. During its consideration, Mr. Bradlaugh was the subject of numerous resolutions, more or less violent expulsions, elections and re-elections, legal proceedings, and unlimited abuse. His personal character, however, was of the highest, and in the end modern liberty of thought and ideas of justice won for the individual a toleration which old-fashioned notions of religious propriety would never have granted to his system of belief—or unbelief. Mr. Gladstone, in the face of constant opposition from many of his closest friends, and in the teeth of the vigorous battle which Lord Randolph Churchill carried on, struggled for what he believed to be truth and justice. And in this case he was fighting his own personal predilections; his strong innate love for the Church and for religious recognition in the State.

But Mr. Bradlaugh had been duly and constitutionally elected, and he, therefore, thought him entitled to sit in the House. In 1880, a motion declaring him incompetent to do so was carried. In 1883, Mr. Gladstone made a speech which came within three votes of rescinding this resolution. During this address he said:

> "I have no fear of atheism in this House. Truth is the expression of the Divine mind, and, however little our feeble vision may be able to discern the means by which God may provide for its preservation, we may leave the matter in His hands, and we may be sure that a firm and courageous application of every principle of equity and of justice is the best method we can adopt for the preservation and influence of truth. I must painfully record my opinion that grave injury has been done to religion in many minds—not in instructed minds, but in those which are ill-instructed, and which have large claims on our consideration—in consequence of steps which have unhappily been taken. Great mischief has been done in many minds through the resistance offered to a man elected by the constituency of Northampton, which a portion of the people believe to be unjust. When they see the profession of religion and the interest of religion ostensibly associated with what they are deeply convinced is injustice, they are led to questions about religion itself. Unbelief attracts a sympathy which it would not otherwise enjoy, and the upshot is to impair those convictions and that religious faith, the loss of which I believe to be the most inexpressible calamity which can fall either upon a man or upon a nation."

Eight years after this time, and when the famous atheist lay dying in his modest London home, the House, which had never made the matter a party question, and had already tacitly permitted him to take his place and record his vote, unanimously repealed its declaration of incompetence, and affirmed Mr. Bradlaugh to be—what he had long been in practice—a fit and proper person to sit in Parliament.

Following the first stages of this untoward circumstance in domestic policy came a whole series of foreign complications. It is a curious fact that these external troubles should have marred the popularity and influence of both Mr. Gladstone's chief administrations. In the first one they were great questions—inherited, and impossible to escape from. In the second they were chiefly small and irritating wars arising out of previous policy, and upon the settlement of which partisan feeling has been strongly aroused. Afghanistan and the Transvaal, Egypt and the Soudan, represent difficulties which gave Mr. Gladstone intense worry during these years, and caused England much sorrow, considerable bloodshed, and admitted dissatisfaction. It was in Europe, however, that the first complication arose. Mr. Gladstone, during one of his eloquent efforts in Midlothian, had denounced the Beaconsfield Government as standing by the autocratic powers of the Continent, and opposing the smaller countries in their struggles for liberty.

To add point to his remarks, he had made an onslaught upon Austria, which in some respects was deserved, but from the standpoint of a past and future Premier was hardly wise. Austria, he declared, had been "the steady, unflinching foe of freedom in every country in Europe. Austria trampled Italy under foot; Austria resisted the unity of Germany; Austria did all she could to prevent the creation of Belgium; Austria never lifted a finger for the regeneration and constitution of Greece. There is not an instance, there is not a spot upon the whole map, where you can lay your finger and say, 'There Austria did good.'" Such language was unquestionably strong, and, no doubt, useful in emphasizing the fact that this was the country to which Bosnia and Herzegovina had been given by the Berlin Treaty. But, naturally, the country concerned was greatly irritated by the remarks, and when Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister he deemed it necessary to make a frank and public apology for "polemical language used individually when in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility." It was an honourable action, but, naturally, not popular in England. It was a small thing, too, but was certainly an unlucky one, just at the beginning of a Ministry's career.

This matter settled, the Government turned its attention to the questions still pending in connection with the Treaty of Berlin. Turkey had not carried out its terms, so far as Montenegro and Greece were concerned, and, of course, the accession to power in England of its most bitter antagonist did not make the Porte any more willing to accept pacific suggestions from that quarter. Mr. Goschen, however, was sent on a special mission to Constantinople, and Mr. Gladstone made great efforts to preserve the European concert, and enforce united action in the interest of the two smaller powers. A Conference was held at Berlin, and a demonstration of war-ships took place at Ragusa. Eventually, Montenegro received the territory it was entitled to; but Greece, over whose claims the Powers could not agree, had to await events.

Meantime, Afghanistan was in a turmoil. The Treaty of Gaudamak had been obtained, but cancelled by the massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his staff; the second British occupation of Cabul, and the overthrow of Yakoob Khan. When, therefore, Mr. Gladstone came into office, and Lord Ripon went to Calcutta, all was confusion. Abderrahman had become Ameer, but the whole country was in arms. The British troops were besieged in Cabul, and General Burrows was badly beaten at Maiwand, near Candahar. Then the air was cleared by Sir Frederick Roberts' brilliant march from the Capital —which had again been relieved—to Candahar, and by the total defeat of Ayoob Khan. The reorganization of the country, and of its relations with England and India, followed. Candahar became the chief cause of ensuing contention in the British Parliament. It had formed a part of Lord Beaconsfield's "scientific frontier," but was considered by most Liberals to be useless for the purposes of Indian defence. The Government took the ground that it belonged to Afghanistan, and should be given back, and this was eventually done. But a satisfactory arrangement of alliance was made with the new Ameer, and he has since proved a staunch friend to Great Britain, always accepting his annual subsidy with distinguished alacrity and refraining from the exhibition of any Russian tendencies.

No sooner was Afghanistan disposed of than the Transvaal came to the front. Mr. Gladstone had protested against its annexation in 1877. That policy had been carried out as part of the general scheme of a united South Africa, and because the Boers were an unscrupulous and somewhat turbulent quantity in the general public life of those communities. For the time being, they had accepted the matter with sufficient philosophy, though protests were, of course, made, and some deputations had been sent to England. Mr. Gladstone, however, took up their cause, and during his Midlothian campaigns used words which were carried into every corner of South Africa, and proved quite enough to stir up all the dormant embers of opposition and native obstinacy. "The Transvaal," he declared, on November 25th, 1879, "is a country where we have chosen most unwisely, I am tempted to say insanely, to place ourselves in the strange predicament of the free subjects of a monarchy going to coerce the free subjects of a republic, and to compel them to accept a citizenship which they decline and refuse."

A month later he asked another audience: "Is it not wonderful to those who are freemen, and whose fathers have been freemen, and who hope that their children will be freemen, and who consider that freedom is an essential condition of civil life, and that without it you can have nothing great and nothing noble in political society—that we are led by an Administration, and led, I admit, by Parliament, to find ourselves in this position. that we are to march upon another body of freemen, and, against their will, to subject them to despotic government?"

When, therefore, Mr. Gladstone came into power, it was expected that something would be done to reverse his predecessor's policy. But such an action is very unusual in England, where all Governments are supposed to stand by public treaties or engagements with external States when once they are really made. However that may be, after nine months of patient waiting the Boers rose in rebellion, and their sharpshooters inflicted sad havoc upon the troops sent against them—at Ungogo, Laing's Nek, and Majuba Hill. These defeats aroused much ominous feeling in England, and just at the moment when Sir Evelyn Wood was known to have received overwhelming reinforcements, and British South Africa was rejoicing over the expected punishment of its enemies, came the news of an armistice, and the ensuing recognition of the Transvaal's independence. Mr. Gladstone's own words in Parliament may be allowed here to speak for themselves:

> "When in opposition we had declared that, in our judgment, the attempt of the Administration then in power to put down the people of the Transvaal, to extinguish their freedom, and to annex them against their will to England, was a scandalous and disgraceful attempt. When we got into office, we were assured by all the local agents of the British Government—and I have no doubt they spoke in honour and sincerity—that the people of the Transvaal had changed their minds, and were perfectly contented to be annexed to the British Empire. That made it our duty to pause for a while. However much we had opposed the previous Government, it was our duty not to make changes without good and sufficient cause. But before we had been very long in office, the people of the Transvaal rose in arms, and showed us pretty well what their feelings and intentions were. They obtained several successes over the limited body of British troops in South Africa. We felt it was an absolute duty, under such circumstances, to reinforce our military power in that region; and we sent a force to South Africa which would unquestionably have been sufficient to defeat any power that the Dutch burghers could bring into the field against us. But the Boers asked us for an accommodation. What is called the Jingo party was horribly scandalized because we listened to that application. We had got our forces there ready to chastise them. We might have shed their blood. We might have laid prostrate on the field hundreds, possibly thousands, of that small community, and then we should have vindicated the reputation of this country, according to the creed of that particular party. Having undoubted power in our hands, we thought that the time to be merciful is when you are strong. We were strong; we could afford to be merciful. We entered into arrangements with the Transvaal, and the Transvaal recovered its independence."

There is much that is Christian and noble in this conception of the case. But it was not a popular step, and the opposition to it in Parliament, in a part of the press, and in South Africa, was sustained and bitter. It was claimed in the

Colonies concerned that their interests had been sacrificed; the British citizens in the Transvaal left without due protection; and the natives handed back to their hard taskmasters without any protection at all. In one place, the British flag was publicly buried. Eventually, of course, matters found their level, and the discovery of gold is now making the Transvaal British, whether it will or not. And, in 1892, Lord Randolph Churchill, who had been one of the Premier's most violent critics in this connection, visited the Dutch Republic, and declared himself to have been formerly mistaken, and Mr. Gladstone to have been, in the main, right in his policy of surrender.

Egypt, meanwhile, had been assuming its place as the centre of disturbance and diplomacy. England and France were now the joint controllers of Egyptian finance, and each claimed an equal interest in its affairs. They had lent its Khedive money, through private parties, until the whole country was held under a practical mortgage. Lord Beaconsfield's policy had certainly been one of active intervention, including the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, the dethronement of Ismail, and what Mr. Gladstone has called "a solemn engagement" to maintain his successor on the throne. The last-named obligation was the egg from which burst the defence of Tewfik against his rebellious general, Arabi Pasha; the bombardment of Alexandria; the interior campaign; the battle of Tel-el-Kebir; and the practical placing of Egypt under British protection.

The refusal of France to join in the war had compelled England to carry it on alone in defence of a Government which had been established by her joint assistance, carried on almost under her control, and which was obviously dependent upon her against enemies aroused by the presence of British officers in the Khedive's Ministry. So far, the troubles had been inherited, the policy had been reasonably clear and strong, the war brilliantly successful in its principal details and events. Out of it, however, came the disasters of the Soudan campaign. The British Government had not the slightest intention, at first, of doing anything in the great Nile regions and the vast deserts which had so long been tributary to Egypt, but were now in the full tide of rebellion, and falling rapidly under the control of the Mahdi. True, it had occupied Egypt, and was the real ruler and master of that country, but there was no thought of going beyond its immediate boundaries. The first serious difficulties arose through the maintenance of a fiction that the Khedive, and not the British Government, had control in Egypt—even while British troops were patrolling the streets of Cairo. Acting upon this assumption, the Khedive sent Hicks Pasha with a mixed army of Egyptians and other races to overpower the rebel leader. The English officer and his entire force were annihilated. Immediately, the whole Soudan became aflame with excitement, and the Mahdi invested Khartoum, Sinkat, Tokar, Berber, Dongola, and Kassala, which were all garrisoned with

Egyptian troops. He soon appeared to be carrying everything before him, and promised to eventually menace Egypt itself.

Meantime, the British Government, hampered by French suspicion, and by the angry feelings of a large body of its supporters in the House who did not like the continued occupation of Egypt, refused all appeals for assistance, and for a long interval did not attempt intervention. Finally its hand was forced by the defeat of Baker Pacha at Teb, and the massacre at Sinkat. Mr. Gladstone and his Government decided to take steps to bring about the Egyptian evacuation of the Soudan, and its surrender to the Mahdi, or to whatever independent government might be formed or hereafter organized. To carry out this policy, Major-General Charles George Gordon was selected. This man stands out clearly as one of the most remarkable characters in all history. Distinguished as an engineer before Sebastopol, he had afterwards put down one of the greatest rebellions in Chinese annals and saved the Empire, with a few undisciplined forces which he had moulded into an "ever-victorious army." For many years he had presided over the Soudan itself as Egyptian Governor-General, and, while suppressing the slave trade with an iron hand, had made the people love him with Oriental intensity.

In his own nature he combined the best attributes of the days of chivalry and adventure with the noblest and highest Christian qualities. Of him it might well have been afterwards said:

> "His work is done.
> But while the races of mankind endure,
> Let his great example stand;
> Colossal, seen of every land.
> And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure
> Till in all lands, and thro' all human story,
> The path of duty be the path of glory."

He did not like the policy of evacuation, and especially disliked the idea of giving the Soudan up once more to slavery. But he was the only man who could even hope to have any influence over its wild tribes, and it was just possible that he might be able to arrange the matter peaceably. So he took his life in his hand, and crossed the deserts as swiftly as camels could carry him, and as straight for Khartoum as an arrow from the bow. In that lonely ride, and during the many months of intense anxiety which followed the investment of Khartoum, his solitary and gallant figure became the centre of England's regard. An adequate history of that year would fill a volume. Suffice it to say that, though welcomed at first in the city of the desert, Gordon soon found his influence circumscribed by its walls, around which the Mahdi steadily massed his forces. The garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar were massacred, with British forces twenty miles away, at Suakim. Eventually, British troops, under

General Graham, relieved Trinkitat after a gallant march over the desert and victories won against great numerical odds. But instead of pressing on to the more difficult task of relieving Khartoum, they were then withdrawn.

Meanwhile the Government was bombarded with votes of censure at home. One was moved on May 13th, 1884, by Sir M. E. Hicks-Beach, and was defeated by 28 majority; another was lost by 19 votes, and still another by 17. Mr. Gladstone defended the Government in speeches of great ingenuity. He denied that Gordon was in serious danger, and, speaking during the debate in May, asserted that "we had reason to believe, from his own statements, that it was in the power of General Gordon to remove himself and those immediately associated with him from Khartoum by going to the south." On the 5th of August a vote of money was asked for, and the relief expedition decided upon. From that moment, as the Premier afterwards said, "military preparations were never relaxed. The operations were continuous. I believe it would not be found possible to say that from that date forward any delay that could be avoided occurred." On August 23rd, General Wolseley assumed command of the Nile expedition, and on the 28th of January, 1885, Sir Charles Wilson arrived in sight of Khartoum with a rescue party. But it was two days late—and Gordon was dead.

This Soudan policy of the Gladstone Government has never been adequately defended. Friends avoid it, and foes delight in it. It is the one thing in Mr. Gladstone's great career which his warmest admirers do not like; it was, in truth, a stain upon his statesmanship, as it was upon England's honour. It is true that he had long since pointed out the danger of interference in Egypt, and could therefore claim to have warned the country. But that should not have prevented a firm policy of non-intervention; early withdrawal of its forces by Egypt at England's command; a vigorous and successful effort to relieve the garrisons when they had finally been left there too long; or an earlier effort to save Gordon after he was once known to be in a trap at Khartoum. Let Mr. Gladstone's own words, in his Manifesto to the people on September 17th, 1885, draw the curtain upon this unfortunate episode:

> "Lord Hartington has lately and justly stated in general terms that he is not disposed to deny our having fallen into errors of judgment. I will go one step further, and admit that we committed such errors, and serious errors, too, with cost of treasure and of precious lives, in the Soudan. . . . Our mistakes in the Soudan I cannot now state in detail. That task belongs to history. Our responsibility for them cannot now be questioned. Yet its character ought not to be misapprehended. In such a task miscarriages were inevitable. They are the proper and certain consequences of undertakings that war against nature."

The Penjdeh incident was one more foreign complication of these greatly burdened years. England was now responsible by treaty for the defence of the

Ameer of Afghanistan with money, arms, and men, against any foreign aggressor —which, of course, meant Russia. In accordance with an international arrangement, British and Russian commissioners were engaged in delimiting the Afghan frontier, when, on the 30th of March, 1884, the Russians—who had not long before occupied Merv—advanced on an Afghan post called Penjdeh, and drove out its defenders with considerable bloodshed. Instantly, all was commotion in London, and panic in business circles. With what had gone before, this looked like war. Twelve days after the announcement had been made, the position became so critical that Mr. Gladstone asked Parliament for a Vote of Credit of $57,000,000, which was at once granted. In the course of his speech to a crowded and excited House, he said, with solemn voice:

> "We have laboured, and we will continue to labour, for an honourable settlement by pacific means. But one thing I may venture to say with regard to the sad contingency of an outbreak of war between two great powers such as Russia and England—one thing I will say with great strength of conviction and great earnestness in my endeavour to impress it upon the Committee—that we will strive to conduct ourselves to the end of this diplomatic controversy in such a way as that, if, unhappily, it is to end in violence or rupture, we may at least be able to challenge the verdict of civilized mankind, upon a review of the demands and refusals, to say whether we have or whether we have not done all that men could do, by every just and honourable effort, to prevent the plunging of two such countries into bloodshed and strife."

A few days later, in concluding another speech upon the subject, he declared that a blow had been struck at an ally who had committed no offence, and then added, amid ringing cheers from all sides of the House: "We must do our best to have right done in the matter." Finally, Russia withdrew from Penjdeh, and settled the dispute amicably.

Whilst these external storms were blowing upon the ramparts of Liberalism, domestic events occurred which, though hardly less difficult to manage, were not of such a prominent nature. Mr. Forster introduced an Irish Compensation Disturbance Bill in 1880, which was intended as an amendment to the Land Act. It passed after prolonged debate, but was thrown out by the Lords. In June, Mr. Gladstone brought down a supplementary Budget, which included a penny additional on the income tax. Early in August he was taken ill, and during the period of confinement which followed was deluged with telegrams of sympathy and inquiry from all parts of the Empire and Europe. A little earlier in the summer he had been present when Mr. Herbert Gladstone was presented with an address by the Liberals of Middlesex, for whom he had made a strong fight in the recent general elections. The event took place in Her Majesty's Opera House, London, and was presided over by Mr. W. E. Forster. Shortly afterwards, the Liberals of

Greenwich presented the Premier with an illuminated address and a carved oak chair, as pleasant souvenirs of his former constituency.

The session of 1881 was an Irish session, and its legislation was mainly devoted to the troubled and lawless condition of "the green isle." Mr. Forster introduced a strong Coercion Bill in January; the Premier brought down his Budget on April 4th, and three days later presented an Irish Land Bill in a speech which was as great in its mastery of details as it was in the power of dealing with broad principles. It was an attempt to remedy certain defects in the Land Act of 1870, largely by the appointment of a Court to deal with differences between landlord and tenant. After considerable discussion and a period of dispute with the Upper House, the measure became law in August. Other notable events of the year were the death of Lord Beaconsfield, and Mr. Gladstone's eloquent eulogy of his great rival; the Premier's visit to Leeds, for which Mr. Herbert Gladstone now sat; and his visit to the Guildhall on the 14th of October to receive the freedom of the City of London.

Much useful legislation had been proposed for the session of 1882. But events disposed of the expectation. The Procedure resolutions for the checking of obstruction—mainly Irish—were the subjects of long discussion, and were eventually carried; as was a stringent Prevention of Crime Bill, consequent upon the murder of Lord F. Cavendish and Mr. Burke in Dublin. During the session, Mr. Bright resigned from the Government on account of the Egyptian war, and Mr. Forster, because of the attempted change in Irish policy known as the Kilmainham Treaty, and afterwards voiced in the olive branch held out by his successor, and so cruelly received by the Invincibles. In May, Mr. Gladstone introduced and eventually carried his Arrears Bill, by which deserving Irish tenants who were unable to pay their arrears of past rent, should have one-half paid for them by the State—out of the Irish Church surplus—and the balance cancelled. His Budget did not contain anything remarkable; the expenses of the Egyptian war being met by an addition to the ever-useful income tax. On the 13th of December, the Premier celebrated his political jubilee, having just fifty years before been first elected for Newark.

During this month a Ministerial reorganization was effected by Mr. Childers relieving the Premier of the Exchequer; Lord Hartington taking the War Office; Lord Derby—who had some years before announced his conversion to Liberalism—becoming Colonial Secretary; and Sir C. Dilke, President of the Local Government Board. Mr. Trevelyan had already succeeded the murdered Chief Secretary for Ireland. The session of 1883 was remarkable as showing how little real use the closure was against steady obstruction. Its main practical results were the passing of Agricultural Holdings Bills for England and Scotland, the Bankruptcy Bill, and the Corrupt Practices Bill. That of 1884 was stirring enough to make up for half a dozen quiet sessions. On the

28th of February, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Franchise Bill. It was to complete, or nearly complete, the work commenced in 1832, and carried on in 1867. It was, in fact, the redemption of a Liberal pledge to the country, and was intended to satisfy a general desire.

Without going into details, it may be said that there was a general lowering of the county or rural franchise, and the creation of two or three million new votes. "I take my stand," said the Premier, "on the broad principle that the enfranchisement of capable citizens, be they few or be they many—and if they be many, so much the better—gives an addition of strength to the State." He concluded his speech with words of characteristic eloquence:

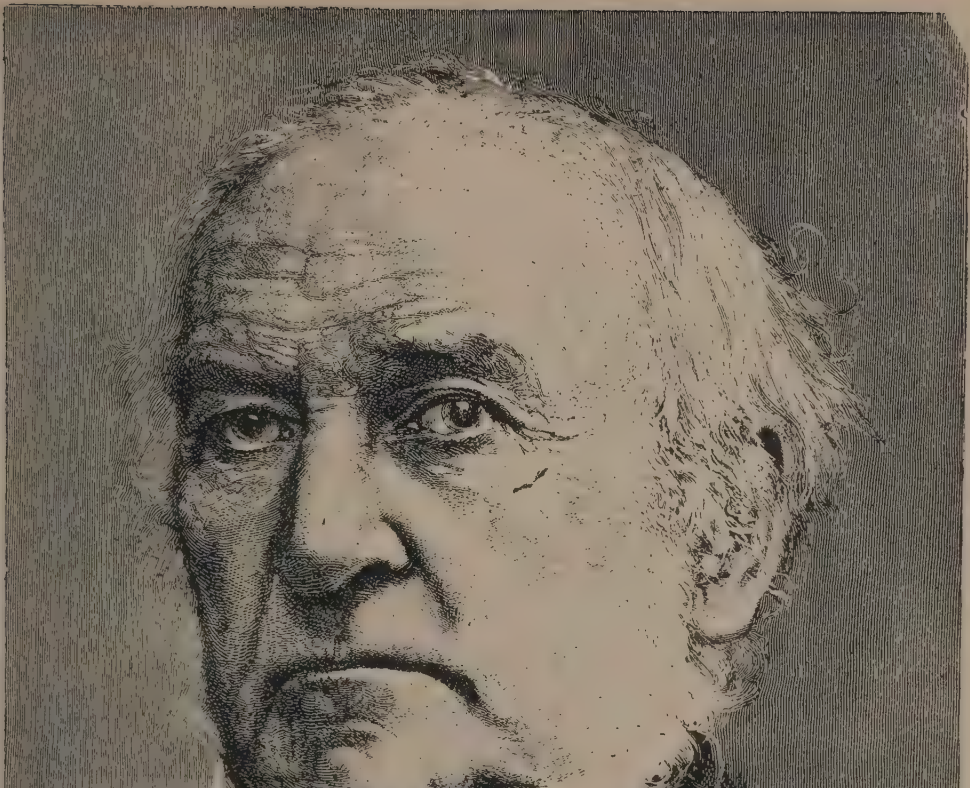
> "I hope the House will look at this measure as the Liberal party in 1831 looked on the Reform Bill of that date, and determined that they would waive criticism of minute details, that they would waive particular preferences and predilections, and would look at the broad scope and general effect of the measure. Do that upon this occasion. It is a Bill worth having, and, if it is worth having, again I say it is a Bill worth your not endangering. Let us enter into no byways which would lead us off the path marked straight before us. Let us not wander upon the hilltops of speculation. Let us not wander into the morasses and fogs of doubt. We are firm in the faith that enfranchisement is good, that the people may be trusted, that the voters under the Constitution are the strength of the Constitution. What we want in order to carry this Bill, considering, as I fully believe, that the very large majority of this country are favourable to its principles—what we want in order to carry it is union, and union only. What will endanger it is disunion, and disunion only. Let us hold firmly together, and success will crown our effort. You will, as much as any former Parliament that has conferred great legislative benefits on the nation, have your reward, and
>
> 'Read your history in a nation's eyes.'
>
> You will have deserved it by the benefits you will have conferred. You will have made this strong nation stronger still; stronger by its closer union without; stronger within by union between class and class, and by arranging all classes and all portions of the community in one solid compact mass round the ancient Throne which it has loved so well, and round a Constitution now to be more than ever powerful and more than ever free."

This strong appeal against the menacing discussions upon matters of detail within the Liberal ranks, was successful. But there was no mention made of the redistribution of seats which would have to follow an increase in the franchise. Around this omission a great Parliamentary conflict raged. The Opposition and the House of Lords wanted the two measures to go together; the Government refused to introduce the latter, or to make any promises as to its terms. Eventually, however, a compromise was effected, a special session was held, and the bill became law. In the autumn, Mr. Gladstone went down to Midlothian, and at a moment when the clouds of dissatisfaction were threatening to overwhelm his Ministry made another series of wonderful speeches. For a time he was the guest of Lord Rosebery at Dalmeny Park, and afterwards stayed at Haddo House, the beautiful home of the Earl of Aberdeen. The Premier's reception at a great meeting in the Corn Exchange, Edinburgh, was perhaps the most enthusiastic of this remarkable tour. It furnished fresh and striking evidence of the power of his oratory.

But the end was approaching. The Premier appeared, when the House met early in 1885, to be very much worn and wearied, although nothing seemed sufficient to daunt his mental defiance of the Opposition. As the session proceeded, however, the position of the Government grew obviously weaker, until, at last, a Soudan motion of censure was beaten by only fourteen votes. An onlooker describes Mr. Gladstone as speaking, not long afterwards, with an ashen-grey tinge on his face, a distinct lassitude in his manner, a broken voice, and the general appearance of a man weary to death. Still, his sentences were perfect in construction, his play of fancy as free, and his sarcasm as keen, as they had ever been. On the 6th of June, and quite unexpectedly, defeat came. It was on an amendment to the Budget proposals moved by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and condemning the increase in the beer and spirit duties. What followed has been graphically described by a special correspondent of the *Pall Mall Budget:*

> "There was no expectation anywhere of a Government defeat. It was only as the division was approaching its end that some suspicion of the truth began to dawn upon the Tories. At once, a state of unusual and fierce excitement supervened. Lord Randolph Churchill was particularly vehement. It was seen that the stream from the Government lobby was getting thinner, while that from the Opposition was still flowing in full tide; and each successive Tory, as he got into the House, was almost torn to pieces as he was asked his number. There were hoarse whispers, and eager demands, and a slight and tremulous cheer. It was soon known that the Government was really beaten, and then the floodgates were opened. Lord Randolph Churchill took off his hat, and began to wave it madly, and soon he had actually got up to stand on his seat, and from this point of vantage kept waving his hat. The Parnellites burst out into a deep, wild note of triumph. 'Coercion'! 'Buckshot'! 'Spencer'! rose from their thick and excited ranks. Throughout all this mad tumult—one of the maddest ever seen in the House of Commons—Mr. Gladstone remained outwardly untroubled, unheeding, even unhearing. He sat in his usual seat, with his despatch to the Queen in the portfolio on his knees, writing apparently with undisturbed swiftness the account of his own defeat. He never once looked up.
>
> "At last the numbers were told; then more wild cheering; . . . then Mr. Gladstone rose. He had his despatch to the Queen and the portfolio in his hand, and his face was quiet, and just a trifle sad and meek. There was a burst of enthusiastic cheers from his followers. It was answered by loud shouts of triumph from the other side, and the storm went on for minutes, cheer answering cheer, and exclamations answering exclamations. Mr. Gladstone stood calm amid it all. He looked over his despatch, and, when the tumult grew loud, even affected to cross its 't's' and dot its 'i's.' But, at last, he was allowed to move the adjournment of the House."

Thus fell Mr. Gladstone's second Government. The Premier announced next day that he had resigned. After some days of doubt, in connection with an admittedly difficult situation, Lord Salisbury undertook to form an administration—one which was destined, however, to be of very brief duration.



WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE,

Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1869-74, 1880-85, 1886, 1892-94.

HAWARDEN CASTLE, FLINTSHIRE,

Seat of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MR. GLADSTONE IN LITERATURE.

THE position of a writer in the wide world of modern literature depends upon so many considerations that it is often more than difficult to define his place or describe his rank. We cannot speak for posterity, or anticipate the verdict of history. In the case of Mr. Gladstone, the obstacles to a just decision are very many. The glamour of a great name, the political feeling which surrounds the events dealt with in some of his most remarkable articles, the controversial tone of so much that he has written, the technical nature of many of his subjects, all combine to limit judgment and control conclusions.

But there still remain certain standards by which we may be guided. Apart from the political issues themselves, there is the obvious fact that Mr. Gladstone's writings upon the Bulgarian and Turkish question exercised a very powerful effect upon contemporaneous public opinion. History will have to admit that. His writings upon matters connected with the union of Church and State have had an equally important effect upon the politics of half a century, while his pamphlet upon the Vatican Decrees raised a controversy which has done much to clear the religious air, and place the issue between the Church of Rome and the Protestant Churches upon a basis which all can understand. These contributions to literature, like his letters upon the Neapolitan prisons and Government, must be considered by history in their bearings upon the public mind and public development.

The influence wielded by his pen will, therefore, be admitted. The versatility of his literary work will also be freely conceded and admired. Whether dealing with the ancient Olympian religion, or the modern gospel of wealth; the progress of free trade, or the "Impregnable Rock of the Holy Scriptures"; the relations of Russia and England, or the ancient beliefs in a future state; the Irish question, or the views of Colonel Ingersoll; the poetry of Tennyson, or the constitutional position of the Monarchy; the translation of some beautiful Italian hymn, or the latest novel by Mrs. Humphrey Ward; the influence of the Wedgwood pottery upon the cultivation of a refined taste, or the position of the United States amongst the nations of the world; Mr. Gladstone seems to be equally at home, and equally fluent and interesting.

Here, also, his high position in literature will be conceded. As a scholarly writer he is remarkable. His works upon Homer and ancient Greece have been already referred to at length, and it is needless to say that they display the very highest elements of scholarship, and the most marked evidences of prolonged study. From earliest youth, Mr. Gladstone has been devoted to the work of the student. If much reading maketh a full man, he must, indeed, be a learned one. And of this, in many branches of literature, we have every proof. It may be truly said, in the words of the poet, that he

> "Was fashioned to much honour. From his cradle
> He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one;
> Exceeding wise, fair-spoken, and persuading;
> Lofty and sour to them that loved him not,
> But to those that sought him, sweet as summer."

His scholarship and versatility have, of course, gone hand in hand, and helped to produce the great mass of writings, the plenitude of which surpasses the product of many men whose whole lives are devoted to literature.

An equally marked and most honourable characteristic of his writings has been their high moral and Christian tone. Exceptions, of course, there are. No one could engage in so many and varied controversies without at times making bitter, and possibly inaccurate, statements. No one could fight so many political battles with his pen, as well as upon the platform, without occasionally going beyond the bounds of charity in the imputation of motives, and transgressing the Golden Rule in dealing with opponents. But, upon the whole, and apart from purely partisan contributions, his works breathe the most lofty sentiments, and inculcate the purest morality. In these days of growing decadence in moral tone, this in itself merits honour and appreciation.

Trashy novelists now flood a steadily growing market with wares which would not have been tolerated—to say nothing of being read—a deçade ago; the craving for sensational literature grows with every fresh product of a vile imagination; and just as French plays and weak comedies have captured a stage once devoted to the masterpieces of Shakespeare, so the modern literary school of diluted ditch-water is struggling to usurp the field still held to a certain extent by Scott and Dickens, by Charlotte Bronte and George Eliot. But to Mr. Gladstone, as Monckton Milnes once said, in some other connection, "no intensity of literary starlight can make a moral noonday," and he cannot endure that modern literary school which inculcates the idea that a modicum of genius may exclude all goodness of character or life, and a little brilliancy of style make beauty of thought and principle utterly unnecessary. This fact in his career as a writer is another important consideration in trying to find his true place and rank.

It is therefore evident that Mr. Gladstone has won a high position in literature through the influence which his writings have had upon national and international events; through the versatility and scholarship displayed; and because of the high principles so often inculcated in noble words. But he is not a great author. To come up to that standard, it is necessary to produce a work which stands out from and above all others in some particular direction. His studies upon Homer come the nearest to that requirement, but they are too unequal, too little known to the world at large, too likely fated to live chiefly upon the dusty shelves of the scholar's library.

His miscellaneous writings exhibit vast industry, and a fluency which is fortunately more restricted by considerations of space than has, at times, been the case in some of his great orations. But the infinity of subjects considered preclude the possibility of distinct originality in each or many of the articles, while the very multitude of words required to deal with these many topics have too often prevented the presentation of really great ideas. His phrases are frequently vigorous, and sometimes trenchant; his language is always good, though, at times, too diffuse; his sentences are very often eloquent and beautiful. As some one has most truly said, his essays remind the reader more of the flowing eloquence and declamation of a Burke than of the massiveness, the dignity, and the majesty of a Bacon.

In 1879, Mr. Gladstone published, in seven volumes, a collection of his various writings, under the title, "Gleanings of Past Years." He endeavoured to exclude from those selected all essays of a strictly controversial or classical nature, and the result was a publication of great popularity and public interest. In the first volume were four articles dealing with the life and policy of the Prince Consort; several treating of the County Franchise question, and including his famous controversy with Mr. Lowe upon the merits of a popular and wide electorate; and his splendid essay, entitled "Kin beyond Sea." These articles really give a condensed description of his views upon the Constitution, the Crown, and the place of the people in controlling or modifying this system of government. They embody the reflections and prolonged personal experience of a statesman who had done much political work, and seen much Cabinet service.

Mr. Gladstone greatly admired and respected Prince Albert. He understood something of his bright character, and in these pages, as well as upon previous political occasions, testifies strongly concerning the nobility and beneficence of his all too brief career. From what the author says, we are enabled to obtain a glimpse, and perhaps more than a glimpse, of the reasons which made Her Majesty the Queen mourn her husband's loss so long and so sadly. To quote a sentence in the first essay of this volume:

> "In his well-ordered life there seemed to be room for all things—for every manly exercise, for the study and practise of art, for the exacting cares of a splendid court, for minute attention to every domestic and paternal duty, for advice and aid towards the discharge of public business in its innumerable forms, and for meeting the voluntary calls of an active philanthropy; one day in considering the best form for the dwelling of the people; another day in bringing his just and gentle influence to bear on the relations of

master and domestic servant; another in suggesting and supplying the means of culture for the most numerous classes; another in some good work of almsgiving or religion."

He goes on to point out the example which the silent witness of an earnest, manful, and devoted life, such as that of Prince Albert, affords to all who strive after better things. The Prince had always shown "an untiring sense of duty, and active consciousness of the perpetual presence of Him who is its author and its law, and a lofty aim beyond the grave." In another eloquent paper dealing with the Court of Queen Victoria, the author has a characteristic passage of further eulogy: "As even a fine figure may be eclipsed by a gorgeous costume, so during life the splendid accompaniments of a Prince Consort's position may, for the common eye, throw the qualities of his mind and character, his true humanity, into shade. These hindrances to effectual perception are now removed; and we can see, like the form of a Greek statue, severely pure in their bath of southern light, all his extraordinary gifts and virtues; his manly force, tempered with gentleness, playfulness, and love; his intense devotion to duty; his pursuit of the practical with an unfailing thought of the ideal; his combined allegiance to beauty and to truth; the elevation of his aims, with his painstaking care and thrift of time, and methodizing of life so as to waste no particle of his appliances and powers."

Apart from the literary interest and merits of these articles is their special importance as giving many revelations of personal political opinion and the bases of past political events. In the one which originally appeared during January, 1878, as a review of the Prince Consort's career, is a statement regarding the Aberdeen Government's policy in opposing the Sebastopol Committee, and the intention of Lord Palmerston's Government to carry on the same line of resistance. Eventually, however, the pressure became too great, and the Ministry succumbed. "The Peelites," says Mr. Gladstone, "adhered to their text; and as the minority they, in form, resigned, but in fact, and of necessity, they were driven from their offices. Into the rights of the question, we shall not enter; but undoubtedly they were condemned by the general opinion out of doors. Moreover, as in the letting out of water, the breach, once made, was soon and considerably widened. They had been parties in the Cabinet, not only to the war, but to the extension, after the outbreak had taken place, of the conditions required from Russia. But when it appeared that the demands were to be still further extended, or were to be interpreted with an unexpected rigour, and that the practical object of the Ministerial policy appeared to be a great military success in prosecuting the siege of Sebastopol to a triumphant issue, they declined to accompany the Ministry in their course."

Here we have, perhaps, a partial explanation of the Peelites' later policy of opposition to Palmerston. A few pages further on Mr. Gladstone expresses his sense of "the great incidental evils which accompany the breaking up of those singularly, but finely and strongly organized wholes, our known political parties." To deal with his papers on the Franchise is impossible in any limited space. He describes the Parliamentary Constitution of England as one of the wonders of the world. "Time was its parent; Silence its nurse." Parliament had imbibed, even before 1832, enough of "the free air of heaven to keep the lungs of liberty in play." Mr. Lowe is twitted for regarding universal suffrage with as much fear as he would universal murder, and, in dealing with the modern qualifications for winning favour in a constituency, he declares that "the two circumstances which strike me most forcibly and most painfully are, first, the rapid and constant growth of the money power; secondly, the reduction, almost to zero, of the chances of entrance into Parliament for men who have nothing to rely upon but their talent and their character."

Referring to the few occasions where a nation has really been able to control its rulers, the author says that "it is written in legible characters, and with a pen of iron, on the rock of human destiny, that within the domain of practical politics the people must, in the main, be passive." They can make representatives, but they cannot manage them—except in rare instances. In his paper on "Kin Beyond Sea," published first through the columns of the *North American Review*, Mr. Gladstone rises to a high level of literary excellence. One extract may be given:

> "There were, however, the strongest reasons why America could not grow into a reflection or repetition of England. Passing from a narrow island to a continent almost without bounds, the Colonists at once and vitally altered their conditions of thought, as well as of existence, in relation to the most important and most operative of all social facts, the possession of the soil. In England, inequality lies imbedded in the very base of the social structure; in America, it is a late, incidental, unrecognized product, not of tradition, but of industry and wealth, as they advance with various, and of necessity unequal, steps. Heredity, seated as an idea in the hearts' core of Englishmen, and sustaining far more than it is sustained by those of our institutions which express it, was as truly absent from the intellectual and moral store, with which the Colonists traversed the Atlantic, as if it had been some forgotten article in the bills of lading that made up their cargoes. Equality combined with liberty, and renewable at each descent from one generation to another, like a lease with stipulated breaks, was the groundwork of their social creed."

The second volume of the "Gleanings" is devoted entirely to literary reviews—articles upon Blanco White, Giacomo Leopardi, Tennyson, Wedgwood, Bishop Patteson, and Dr. Norman Macleod. The melancholy life and marvellous intellectual struggles of Blanco White; the beauties of Italian literature, and the poetic power of Leopardi; the missionary zeal and adventures of Bishop Patteson; the religious labours of Dr. Macleod; the utility and beauty of the fine arts in connection with Wedgwood's life work, are handled with skill and discrimination. But the central articles, from a literary standpoint, are those on Tennyson and Macaulay. The former was written in 1859, just after the "Idylls of the King" had appeared; and the latter in 1876, as a review of Mr. Trevelyan's "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay."

The first thing in the Poet Laureate's writings which seems to have impressed Mr. Gladstone was the boundless and beautiful tribute accorded by "In Memoriam" to his old school friend, Arthur Henry Hallam. The essayist speaks of his early death as having removed one who would have left a great and noble name, and adds that he had himself, more than half a century ago, been in a condition to say:

"I marked him
As a far Alp; and loved to watch the sunrise
Dawn on his ample brow."

Mr. Gladstone quotes at length from this great poem, and states that by the time it had sunk into the public mind Mr. Tennyson had taken rank as the chief of living English poets. "From his very first appearance," continues the essayist, "he has had the form and fashion of a true poet; the delicate insight into beauty; the refined perception of harmony; the faculty of suggestion; the eye both in the physical and moral world for motion, light, and colour; the dominance of the constructive faculty, and that rare gift—the thorough mastery and loving use of his mother tongue." Tennyson's war poetry he does not consider, as a rule, comparable to his poetry of peace, though the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," written as it is from the heart, and sealed by the conscience of the poet, is "worthy of that great and genuine piece of manhood, its immortal subject." And in this connection the author-statesman presents his own view of war, and his own hope for the time when we can

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace."

He admits that peace has its moral temptations and perils for degenerate man:

> "It is, moreover, not less true that, amidst the clash of arms, the noblest forms of character may be reared, and the highest acts of duty done; that these great and precious results may be due to war as their cause; and that one high form of sentiment in particular, the love of country, receives a powerful and general stimulus from the bloody strife. But this is as the furious cruelty of Pharaoh made place for the benign virtue of his daughter; as the butchering sentence of Herod raised, without doubt, many a mother's love into heroic sublimity; as plague, as famine, as fire, as flood, as every curse and every scourge that is wielded by an angry Providence for the chastisement of man, is an appointed instrument for tempering human souls in the seven-heated furnace of affliction up to the standard of angelic virtue."

This is strong and effective language, and strikes at the root of the question in a style which embodies the highest degree of literary skill and beauty. Mr. Gladstone's analysis of Lord Macaulay's life and writings is also the product of a thoughtful, cultured mind. He enters into an elaborate study of his work from the personal, the literary, and the historic point of view; describes him as "a prodigy, a meteor, almost a portent in literary history"; commends the marvellous range of his abilities, his famous memory, his rare power of illustration, his command of language. "Behind the mark of splendour," says the essayist, "lay a singular simplicity; behind a literary severity, which sometimes approached to vengeance, an extreme tenderness; behind a rigid repudiation of the sentimental, a sensibility at all times quick." But he had faults. "Amidst the blaze of glory there is a want of perspective, of balance, and of breadth." In all his works, the sound and the unsound parts are closely dovetailed, and the ordinary reader has little chance of distinguishing between truth and error where "all is bathed, and lost, in one overpowering blaze and flood of light."

Mr. Gladstone takes issue with the historian upon many points. He boldly challenges his general statement that the reign of Charles II., when the influence of the Church was at its height, was the most immoral in our history; and declares that it would be impossible for any people, and especially the English, to descend, almost instantaneously, from the pinnacle of Puritan purity into the lowest depths of immorality. "Macaulay," he adds, "has mistaken the Court, the theatre, and the circles connected with them, which may be called metropolitan, for the country at large." He declares the picture of the Restoration clergy to be a romance in the form of a history, and points out that Penn, and Marlborough, and Claverhouse, and every one else who opposed William of Orange, are thrown into a common cauldron of condemnation. "That William, that Burnet, that Milton, should have personal embellishments much beyond their due is no intolerable evil. But the case becomes far more grievous when a great historian, impelled by his headlong and headstrong imagination, traduces alike individuals and orders, and hurls them into a hot and flaming Inferno of his own."

Incidentally, the author scorches Buckle, to whom Mr. Trevelyan had appealed for corroboration of some statements made by Macaulay: "Quote, if you choose, publicans on liquor laws, or slave-drivers on the capacities of blacks; cite Martial as a witness to purity, or Bacchus to sobriety; put Danton to conduct a bloodless revolution; or swear in the Gracchi as special constables; but do not set up Mr. Buckle as an arbiter of judicial measure or precision, nor let the fame of anything that is called a religion or a clergy depend upon his nod." With all his differences in opinion and criticism, Mr. Gladstone, however, expresses sincere admiration for the great historian, whose course in life he declares to have been pre-eminently laborious, truthful, simple, independent, and noble. And he returns in full, through the pages of this really splendid paper, the kindly language used toward himself and his first literary production nearly forty years before. He concludes by a comprehensive summary of Macaulay's position :

> "His works are in many respects among the prodigies of literature; in some they have never been surpassed. As lights, they have shone through the whole universe of letters, they have made their title to a place in the solid firmament of fame. But the tree is greater than its fruit; and greater and better yet than the works themselves are the lofty aims and conceptions, the large heart, the independent, manful mind, the pure and noble career, which in this biography have disclosed to us the true figure of the man who wrote them."

In his third volume Mr. Gladstone deals with a number of historical, speculative, and religious subjects. He treats of the Erastian theory and the Scotch Established Church; reviews Professor Seeley's famous work, "Ecce Homo"; writes on "The Courses of Religious Thought"; surveys the whole wide field covered by Sir George Cornewall Lewis' profound work on "The Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion"; and compares the sixteenth century with the nineteenth in a most comprehensive study of the Reformation and its results. The fourth volume deals with foreign affairs, and includes the "Letters to Lord Aberdeen" upon the Neapolitan question ; a review—written in 1852—of Farini's History of the Roman States; the celebrated article upon the relations of Germany, France, and England, contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* in 1870, and declared by the author, in a footnote, to be the only one he had ever written which was meant from the first to be anonymous in substance and form. Some few of his myriad articles upon the Eastern Question are also given—one on Greece, one dealing with Montenegro, and one on the affairs of Egypt.

He uses for the first time in the *Edinburgh Review* article the now famous phrase, "that streak of silver sea," as a designation for the English Channel, and in the one dealing with Egypt—written in 1877—declares that "the territorial appetite has within the last quarter of a century revived among us with abnormal vigour." As for himself, he believes that "every scheme for the acquisition of territorial power in Egypt is but a new snare laid in the path of our policy." The next two volumes of the "Gleanings" are mainly ecclesiastical in their nature, and deal exhaustively with Church history, Church laws, and Church ceremonies. A powerful paper on "Divorce," written in 1857, is republished, as also one penned in 1875, and dealing with the Italian Church. This latter article apparently involved the knowledge of an immense number of Italian authorities—historical, religious, and controversial. The last volume of the series includes chiefly the author's well-known "Chapter of Autobiography," or defence of his consistency in disestablishing the Irish Church; and articles upon the work of universities, the Evangelical movement, and ancient Greece.

These contributions to literature cover an immense range. Perhaps the first thought which comes to the reader is the eloquence of style which characterizes the greater number of them. The command of language seems almost illimitable, and at times becomes too copious for perfect clearness and comprehensibility. The second quality, and it permeates everything, is the intense earnestness of the writer. There is no such thing in all these pages as a jest; there is an utter absence of frivolity; there is never an attempt at *persiflage*. Mr. Gladstone is never flippant, though often facile. He is never feeble, though frequently one-sided, and sometimes, as all very earnest men are, a little narrow in view. But, upon the whole, his ideas are of the most elevated type, his language is usually noble, and his strong religious sense and conviction runs like a golden thread through every article and every line of thought.

In earlier days, Mr. Gladstone had aimed at poetic excellence, and at Eton had written a considerable amount of poetry. Some reference has previously been made to this fact, but in view of his life-long devotion to Homer's poetic power, and his recent translation of Horace, it will bear further consideration. His first effort was written in praise of Canning, and at the age of fifteen. It concludes with the following verse:

"The helm of England needs his guiding hand,
A nation's wonder, and a nation's joy.
He is the pilot that our God has sent
To guide the vessel that was tos't and rent;
Exalt thy head, Etona, and rejoice,
Glad in a nation's loud acclaiming voice;
And, 'mid the tumult and the clamour wild,
Exult in Canning—say, he was thy child."

Other poems written in the two or three years following this included one called "The Shipwreck"; another, "The Ladder of the Law"; another entitled "Guatimozin's Death Song"; and one final tribute to Canning, called "Reflections in Westminster Abbey." They were all of sombre hue, especially the latter, which concluded with the words:

"Again the tomb may yawn—again may Death
Claim the last forfeit of departing breath;
Yet ne'er enshrine in slumber dark and deep
A nobler, loftier prey than where thine ashes sleep."

Some lines upon another topic may also be given as illustrating his lighter mood, and which, so far as known, marked his last effort at original verse. It was called "A Sonnet to a Rejected Sonnet":

"Poor child of Sorrow! who didst boldly spring,
Like sapient Pallas, from thy parent's brain.
All a m'd in mail of proof! and thou wouldst fain
Leap farther yet, and on exalting wing
Rise to the summit of the Printer's Press!
But cruel hand hath nipp'd thy buds amain,
Hath fixed on thee the darkling inky stain,
Hath soil'd thy splendour, and defil'd thy dress!
Weep, gentle Sonnets! Sonnetters, deplore!
And vow—and keep the vow—you'll write no more!"

But though Mr. Gladstone did not write poetry after leaving Eton, he none the less was devoted—and passionately devoted—to literature of a poetic nature. His love for Homer has become historic, his admiration for Tennyson was intense, his affection for Dante has been such that he somewhere declares it to have influenced his whole career. In his "Studies on Homer," the comparison instituted between that great poet and Virgil and Tasso, Dante and Milton, are not only beautiful from a literary standpoint, but wonderfully effective from a critical point of view. He states in one place that "In diction, Virgil is ornate, and Homer simple; in metre, Virgil is uniform and sustained, Homer, free and varied; in the faculty of invention, Homer is inexhaustible, while Virgil gives ground to suspect that he was poor, at least by comparison." He declares it very difficult to institute a just comparison between Homer and Milton:

> "Perhaps the greatest and most pervading merit of the Iliad is its fidelity and vividness as a mirror of man, and of the visible sphere in which he lived, with its infinitely varied imagery, both actual and ideal. But that which most excites our admiration in Milton is the elasticity and force of genius by which he has travelled beyond the human sphere, and bodied forth to us new worlds in the unknown, peopled with inhabitants who must be so immeasurably different from our own race."

In addition to Mr. Gladstone's love for poetic thought and ancient culture, his presentation of the religious principle throughout the great mass of his writings is remarkable for its beauty and force. In his beautiful address, for instance, to the students of Edinburgh University, he dealt with their battle for life and fame, and told them that "difficulty is the rocking cradle of every kind of excellence"; that it is the life of faith which "lights up for you the cheerless world, and transfigures and glorifies all that you encounter, whatever be its outward form, with hues brought from heaven." And he went on to say that "an enduring fame is one stamped by the judgment of the future; of that future which dispels illusions and smashes idols into dust. Little of what is criminal, little of what is idle, can endure even the first touch of the ordeal; it seems as though this purging power, following at the heels of man, were a witness and a harbinger upon earth of the great and final account."

During the debates upon divorce in 1857, his article in the *Quarterly Review* expressed his ideal of womanly character and excellence, his conception of her high place in a Christian community, and his belief in her great opportunities for good under Christian law. The English law of marriage, as it had been, "established woman upon the very highest levels of our moral and spiritual existence, for man's benefit no less than her own." But this, he thought, was threatened by the divorce code, against which he pled so long and earnestly. In one of his volumes upon Homer, Mr. Gladstone described the place of woman as having been slowly and laboriously elevated by the Gospel, until it furnished the purest and most perfect protest that the world has ever seen against the sovereignty of force. And then he went on in somewhat remarkable words:

> "For it is not alone against merely physical, but also against merely intellectual, strength that this protest has been lodged. To the very highest range of intellectual strength known among the sons of Adam, woman seems never to have ascended, but in every, or almost every, case to have fallen somewhat short of it. But when we look to the virtues, it seems probable both that her average is higher, and that she also attains in the highest instances to loftier summits. Certainly there is no proof here of her inferiority to man. Now, it is nowhere written in Holy Scripture that God is knowledge, or that God is power, while it is written that God is love; words which appear to set forth love as the central essence, and all besides as attributes. Woman, then, holds of God, and finds her own principal development, in that which is most Godlike. Thus, therefore, when Christianity wrought out for woman, not a social identity, but a social equality, not a rivalry with the function of man, but an elevation in her own function reaching as high as his, it made the world and human life in this respect also a true image of the Godhead."

There is in this single paragraph a whole volume of condensed thought for the modern school of woman's rights, and for the believers in new and fantastic and ever-varying methods of proving or vindicating woman's so-called mission. But this is one of the great qualities of Mr. Gladstone's literary work. Everywhere there is food for thought, whether it be in strong agreement or in the intense opposition which earnest writing always creates. And though he may not be considered by history to have been a great author, yet the contributions to English literature, which fill in varied form and degrees of excellence more than twenty-two pages of the printed catalogue in the British Museum, constitute a monument of industry, of eloquence, of high ability, and of lofty principle.

He will rank high in the list of English statesmen who have also been authors. His first political hero, George Canning, has been described as "steeped in literature to his lips"; and in his day he wrote prose and poetry with equal point and charm. Mr. Gladstone, also through his long career, has done much to dissipate the once-popular impression—which Burke and Addison did so much to create—that statecraft and literature do not go well together. In this he has been helped by Macaulay, and still more by Disraeli, while in latter days the idea been finally dispelled by Morley and Bryce, Lytton and Trevelyan, Balfour and Rosebery. And not the least pleasant page in the personal retrospect of a remarkable Englishman must be the feeling that he has written much, and that—aside from strictly controversial and political productions—it has been in the main permeated with the highest ideals and filled with the noblest thoughts.

CHAPTER XXV.

DEATH OF LORD BEACONSFIELD—THE GREAT RIVALS.

THE April morning in 1881, which witnessed the passing away of Lord Beaconsfield, changed the whole face of English politics, extinguished the light of a great personality, removed from Mr. Gladstone's pathway his most powerful rival, and closed a chapter in English history and European statecraft which is marked in every line by the opposing principles and clashing policies of two men of unique character and striking intellect. And the national feeling at the moment was probably voiced, as well as a personal sentiment of deep sorrow, by the Queen's remarkable letter to Dean Stanley, recently published in the latter's memoirs:

> OSBORNE, April 21st, 1881.
>
> DEAR DEAN,—
>
> Thank you very much for your sympathy in the loss of my dear, great friend, whose death on Tuesday night completely overwhelmed me.
>
> His devotion and kindness to me, his wise counsels, his great gentleness combined with firmness, his one thought of the honour and glory of the country, and his unswerving loyalty to the Throne, make the death of my dear Lord Beaconsfield a national calamity. My grief is great and lasting.
>
> I know he would wish to rest with the wife he loved so well, and not in Westminster Abbey, where, however, I am anxious that a monument should be erected to his memory.
>
> Ever yours affectionately, V. R. & I.

Both the rival statesmen were great men. Lord Beaconsfield has somewhere said that such a designation can be properly applied to "one who affects the mind of his generation; whether he be a monk in his cloister agitating Christendom, or a monarch crossing the Granicus and giving a new character to the Pagan world." And he, in his time, had guided Parliament, mastered and moulded a great party, controlled his own country, changed the system and style of government in a vast Empire, altered the course of European history, and, after forty years of struggle, had stood upon the pinnacle of national popularity. Mr. Gladstone had risen in other paths to equal or superior greatness. He had managed the finances of England with a master hand; he had led his party into office and carried a mass of varied legislation unequalled in British history; he had made his marvellous voice and oratorical power ring into the very hearts and minds of a great people during a prolonged series of years.

There were some few points of resemblance between the two leaders; some curious similarities in character and career. But, upon the whole, history will proclaim them to have been diverse in personality, antagonistic in principle. They were as opposite as the poles in origin and early environment. Mr. Gladstone, born and reared amidst wealth and commercial surroundings; trained in the great aristocratic school and university of his day; accustomed to political debate and study from his earliest childhood; environed by every care and attention, and possessed of friends in the highest circles of the land—stepped into Parliament as into a drawing-room, and entered public life as a matter of course. Lord Beaconsfield, born in circumstances of only moderate comfort, and amid surroundings of literary labour at a time when literature was not highly thought of; trained in small private schools, and resting under the stigma of an alien and hated nationality; forced to endure galling distinctions and to accept boyish inferiority, and even persecution; without influential friends or reasonable means for advancement; articled for some time to a London solicitor—fought his way into Parliament after three severe contests, and in the teeth of much severe external criticism and considerable contempt.

Mr. Gladstone was a younger man by three years, and he entered the House of Commons five years sooner than his rival. His first speech was a success, and, although his connection with the slavery question somewhat hampered him, those first years in Parliament were eminently prosperous. Mr. Disraeli's first speech was a failure, and his early years in Parliament covered a period of prolonged struggle. In a letter to his sister—for whom he entertained so deep an affection—is found, under date of December 8th, 1837, the following:

> "I made my maiden speech last night, rising very late after O'Connell, but at the request of my party, and with the full sanction of Sir Robert Peel. As I wish to give you an *exact* idea of what occurred, I state at once that my *début* was a *failure*, so far that I could not succeed in gaining an opportunity of saying what I intended; but the failure was not occasioned by my breaking down, or any incompetency on my part, but from the physical powers of my adversaries. I can give you no idea how bitter, how factious, how unfair they were."

But he told the House that it would yet listen to him—and it did. In these years Mr. Gladstone held many offices. He had the good fortune to obtain a thorough administrative training before taking the great post of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Yet for fifteen years Mr. Disraeli was never in a Government, and not until he assumed the Chancellorship, in 1852, did he hold office. From a literary standpoint, the two men possessed slight resemblances and immense differences. At about the same early age both essayed poetry. Gladstone wrote his sombre memorials of Canning, and some clever efforts at sarcasm. Disraeli determined to rival Dante and Milton in "A Revolutionary Epic"—and naturally failed. A little later, both wrote largely in defence, and in glowing eulogy, of the British Constitution, its glories and its dangers. But here all affinity ends. At nineteen, Disraeli had produced "Vivian Grey," perhaps the most remarkable and brilliant novel of the early century, and certainly one of the most singular products of youthful genius to be found in history. When a dozen years later Gladstone sat down to write a solemn, earnest, and able treatise upon the union of State and Church, Disraeli had won fame by several other striking stories of eastern or aristocratic life.

It was with reference to his first novel, blazing with coronets and gems, sparkling with wit and metaphor, laden with gorgeous surroundings and great names, that his accomplished and astonished father is said to have exclaimed: "Dukes? Sir, what does my son know about dukes? He never saw one in his life." The son lived, however, not only to create dukes and peers, but to make his Sovereign an Empress. But it had been a long and weary struggle before that time came. Sir Robert Peel, who usually encouraged the young men in his party, and who took up Gladstone so strongly and wisely, seemed unable to appreciate Disraeli, and probably regarded his first speech and its failure as the end of the young member's career. Neglected, therefore, by his own leaders; with his abilities ignored by the party; his peculiarities of dress, and style, and manner grossly exaggerated; his humour and his character equally misunderstood; it is not difficult to appreciate the obstacles which he had to surmount on his road to power, and which, in these earlier years, were far greater than those encountered by his distinguished rival. But the end was the same:

"Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
  And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
  And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known,
  And lives to clutch the golden keys
  To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne."

Not that Mr. Gladstone had no obstacles to overcome. The family connection with slavery was in itself an unpleasant environment for a high-strung, sensitive nature, and it will always be somewhat of a surprise that he should have been able to condone and defend its practice. It was, however, a part and parcel of his domestic training. And this very sensitiveness of disposition seems to have had the effect upon him, that it so frequently has in other cases, of producing a certain seriousness of appearance and gravity in manner. Where Disraeli was gay, witty, fascinating, openly anxious to please, and very popular in society, Gladstone, at this period (1839), is described by an onlooker in the House of Commons as "cold, serene, haughty, and intensely ambitious."

Mr. Gladstone possessed a charm of manner which was very great in its way, and due, perhaps, chiefly to an old-fashioned courtesy which never forsook him. But he was too much wrapt up in great aims—it may be great thoughts—and too intent upon the all-absorbing subject of national import at the moment, to give way to the lighter topics of daily life, in the handling of which Disraeli so marvellously excelled. In after years Mr. Gladstone became noted for his skill in talking, but it was always more or less of a monologue, and full of value as it might be, instructive as it usually was, it naturally did not afford room for that play of wit and rivalry of intellect which makes clever conversation so fascinating. But in addition to temperament, Mr. Gladstone had for many years to struggle with religious ideas and ecclesiastical convictions which were not in harmony with his party, or with the age in which he lived. Only great ability—and in the highest degree—could have won for a man, who seemed cut out for a student and a divine, fame as a commercial statesman and a political orator. So with his rival, who seemed specially framed by nature for a society wit and a popular novelist.

During their long career in the House of Commons—for nearly forty years they faced each other in limited or unlimited antagonism—no two men could present a greater contrast. Mr. Disraeli, with his remarkable, almost oriental, face, his absolutely impassive and self-absorbed demeanour, his fine dark eyes, and single curl of black hair hanging from the crown of his head, exhibited in the later and more famous years of his life a personality of unique interest. In Parliament he allowed no vestige of the social lion and brilliant wit to be seen by the public. Expression and intelligence were alike concealed from view behind a face that had become a perfect mask, while the statesman himself would sit for hours with his head bent, his arms folded, and his legs crossed—alone, and apparently unheeding what passed around. Sir T. Wemyss Reid has described in graphic words that wonderful face and manner, from which neither friend nor foe could ever learn anything. "It was the face of a sphinx, the most inscrutable, unfathomable face in all England"—and in all English history.

Mr. Gladstone was entirely different in appearance, manner, and style. In early days he had been called "handsome Gladstone," and, though the decades passed and brought many changes, they still preserved a noble face;

pallid, it might be, with years of toil, and with the dark hair thinned, and the dark eyes caverned under a lofty brow; but still retaining an aspect of nobility. His nervous lineaments were incapable of concealing emotion. One could watch the blending of generosity and scorn even in the play of the nostrils, and an alternating severity and sweetness in the mobile mouth. A close observer has said that

> "It is the most mobile and expressive countenance in the House of Commons; it can no more conceal the thoughts flitting through the brain behind it than the mirror can refuse to reflect the figure placed before it; it is incapable of reserve or of mystery; hope, fear, anxiety, exultation, anger, pleasure, each of these in turn is writ large upon it, so that the spectator watching closely can read it like a book."

A complete change seems to have come over the personal manner of the two men. During his first years in Parliament, Mr. Disraeli does not appear to have used or developed his famous impassiveness, and tendency to loneliness and assumed abstraction. He had gathered around him a number of high-spirited young men who believed that they possessed a mission to regenerate England, revive patriotism, and re-establish the aristocracy in its old-time position. Lord John Manners, Henry Hope, Monckton Milnes—afterwards Lord Houghton, and a Liberal in politics—Alfred Tennyson, George Smythe (afterwards Lord Strangford, and a man of great culture, wit, and fascination), were the leading members of his "Young England" party. Those of them who were in Parliament certainly did not find Disraeli unwilling to utilize his brilliant qualities. On the other hand, Mr. Gladstone seems to have stood very much alone. He had no special followers—at least until Peel's death in 1850—and even then appears to have maintained a reserved and somewhat distant manner. But as time passed this became changed, and when the two men faced each other as party leaders Disraeli had grown strangely silent, and seemed to prefer solitude—so far as conversation was concerned—while Gladstone's face became more and more speaking in its expression, and his liking for conversation with colleagues and friends more and more marked.

In force of conviction and earnestness there was a strange difference between them. Yet it was more apparent than real. Mr. Disraeli has shown in that remarkable trinity of novels, Coningsby, Sybil, and Tancred, a degree of enthusiasm fully equal to that displayed by Mr. Gladstone in his books on Church and State. Only, the former is devoted to the revival of a certain phase of life and opinion in England; the latter to the maintenance of a united Church and nation. Where the one loved Homer with a deep and fervent affection, the other earnestly pled for and praised the Jews at a sacrifice of personal popularity, and in the teeth of popular prejudice. Carlyle, who liked neither leader, and loved no one, has made a most entertaining comparison, which may be given in this connection:

> "I have often been amused at thinking of the contrast between the two men. There is Beaconsfield—he hasn't got a conscience at all, and he knows he hasn't got a conscience, and very well pleased he is that it should be so; but as for that other one—that Gladstone—eh, mon, what a conscience he has! There never was such a conscience as his. He bows down to it, and obeys it, as if it were the very voice of God himself. But, eh, sir! he has the most marvellous faculty in the world for making that conscience say exactly what he wants."

Carlyle, with all his rugged genius, is often far from just, and this was one of the occasions. Mr. Disraeli had once flirted a little with Radicalism, but it was in very early political youthfulness, and, once his opinions had been formed, never really swerved or changed. He, in fact, never held office in anything but a Tory government. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, changed his views steadily, deliberately, and publicly. And for doing so he cannot properly be blamed. But "Vivian Grey" gave Disraeli a reputation which he could never escape from entirely, and his famous sentence, written at nineteen, will long live in history: "A smile for a friend and a sneer for the world is the way to govern mankind, and such was the motto of Vivian Grey." There is little doubt, also, that he rather affected this sort of thing in society during his younger days, and that fact has helped to widen and deepen an impression which was neither just nor accurate.

The political views of the two leaders were vast in their differences. Mr. Gladstone's are, in some degree, expressed and voiced throughout these pages; let Lord Beaconsfield's find voice in the following extract from his preface to "Lothair." He declares it to include his policy and national aims during many years:

> "To change back the oligarchy into a generous aristocracy round a real throne; to infuse life and vigour into the Church, as the trainer of the nation, by the revival of Convocation on a wide basis; to establish a commercial code on the principles successfully negotiated by Lord Bolingbroke at Utrecht . . . and triumphantly vindicated by his political pupil and heir, Mr. Pitt; to govern Ireland according to the policy of Charles I., and not of Oliver Cromwell; to emancipate the political constituencies of 1832 from sectarian bondage and contracted sympathies; to elevate the physical as well as the moral condition of the people by establishing that labour requires regulation as much as property; and all this rather by the use of ancient forms and the restoration of the past than by political revolution founded on abstract ideas."

Mr. Gladstone represented from time to time the national desire for change, or modification of institutions and policy. He tried to voice the popular will, and in his last great political effort endeavoured to guide and mould opinion, as well as to express it. But popular opinion is a very fluctuating quantity, and a party whose foundations rest upon desires for reform, or alteration in what exists, and has existed, for perhaps centuries of historic growth, must necessarily have many struggles of a nature which seems to be unceasing, as well as unsatisfactory. For change is in itself unending, and he who ministers to the popular appetite in that direction can rest assured of having a complicated and continuous conflict during his whole career. Mr. Disraeli, on the other hand, was a sincere believer in the efficiency and greatness of the British Constitution. When he died, in 1881, he was almost in this respect where Mr. Gladstone and he had stood in the Parliament of forty years before.

Not that he would refuse all change or amendment in the country's institutions—his policy during the Reform Bill struggles proved the contrary. But he had a profound aversion to change for the sake of change; to needless or experimental interferences with the Constitution which had made England powerful and kept her free. This feeling is well represented in an extract from one of his greatest speeches in Parliament—delivered May 8th, 1865:

> "There is no country at the present moment that exists under the same conditions as the people of this realm. You have an ancient, powerful, and richly-endowed Church, and perfect religious liberty. You have unbroken order and complete freedom. You have landed estates as large as the Romans, combined with a commercial enterprise such as Carthage and Venice united never equalled. And you must remember that this peculiar country, with these strong contrasts, is not governed by force. It is governed by a most singular series of traditionary influences, which generation after generation cherishes and preserves, because it knows that they embalm custom and represent law. And with this you have created the greatest Empire of modern times. You have amassed a capital of fabulous amount. You have devised and sustained a system of credit still more marvellous, and you have established a scheme of labour and industry so vast and complicated that the history of the world affords no parallel to it. And these mighty creations are out of all proportion to the essential and indigenous elements and resources of the country. If you destroy that state of society, remember this: *England cannot begin again.*"

Here rests the difference between the two parties; the natural difference between the two leaders. Disraeli regarded the Constitution and governmental system as part and parcel of the popular greatness and external strength of England, and, therefore, dreaded serious change or vital amendment. Gladstone regarded the people as superior to any Constitution, and looked to them as being the real strength of the nation. Disraeli wanted the people to act *through* the Constitution in building up and strengthening the Empire; Gladstone desired the people, upon more than one occasion, to act *over* the Constitution in promoting their own domestic interests. As the history of the century now appears to us, the Conservative party and its leader seem to have acted as brakes upon the wheel of progress—but only so far as to prevent rash innovation or too hasty legislation. The Liberal party and leader, on the other hand, appear as the pioneers of progress—the champions of change which, at times, might be dangerous, but was, in the end, beneficial. Gladstone impelled the wheel of the carriage of State up hills and over obstacles. Disraeli controlled it upon the down-grade, and guided it safely through dangerous places. Such, at least, may seem, in a general sense, to have been the mission of English political parties and leaders during many past years.

To those who remember or have seen Gladstone and Disraeli struggling over Reform, battling like giants over the Irish Church, fighting each other, in the eyes of all Europe, upon the Eastern Question, wrestling in the political arena upon a thousand and one subjects, it is almost wonderful to think of their approach towards union in the early "fifties." Had the Earl of Derby's fond ambition been realized, and the Peelite and Derbyite wings of the party been reunited, the destiny of England would, perhaps, have been altered. But it was clearly impossible that the two men could work together:

"Two stars keep not their motion
In one sphere."

If they had joined hands in harmonious action, what could they not have done? Beaconsfield would have contributed the imagination, Gladstone the enthusiasm; Beaconsfield the love of empire and the masterful foreign policy, Gladstone the brilliant finance and domestic legislation; Beaconsfield the sarcasm and wit of oratory, Gladstone the depth and fervour of eloquence. The former, it has been said, was a keen judge of men; the latter, a good judge of mankind. Some time in or about 1880, Mr. James Knowles, the editor of the *Nineteenth Century*, gave a dinner party, at which the talk turned upon this very point, when Lord Houghton promptly put the epigram in a bright and rather clever verse:

"We spoke of two high names of speech and pen,
How each was seeing, and how each was blind;
Knew not mankind, but keenly knew all men;
Knew naught of men, but knew and loved mankind."

The personal relations of the two statesmen were not particularly friendly. Sometimes they were very much the reverse, especially when Mr. Gladstone was carried away by one of his white heats of passionate earnestness. But Lord Beaconsfield was not a man of strong antipathies. The Rev. Malcolm MacColl tells us that he was talking with the Liberal champion about a fortnight before the first Midlothian campaign, when Mr. Gladstone, somewhat to his surprise, expatiated upon Lord Beaconsfield's debating powers, "his splendid Parliamentary pluck," and other qualities which he admired, closing with the statement that the Tory leader was not a man of strong animosities: "I don't believe, for instance, that he hates me at all." The probabilities are that, at that moment, Mr. Gladstone had worked himself up into a condition when he was himself not far from having that feeling for his antagonist. But it would not last long.

In connection with their personal relations, Dean Stanley has recorded an incident which is very characteristic. It was during the summer of 1874, when Mr. Disraeli had just reached the Premiership and the high places of power. A State luncheon was being given the Czar of Russia at Marlborough House, and Disraeli naturally occupied a post of honour near the Emperor, while Mr. Gladstone sat lower down, and next to the Dean. When the gathering rose, Disraeli walked down the line of guests, and, as he passed where his rival was standing, stopped, and said—in allusion to his temporary absence from Parliament—with a mixture of comedy and tragedy expressed in his face: "You *must* come back to us; indeed, we cannot possibly do without you." Mr. Gladstone, with more than usual severity, according to the Dean, answered: "There are things possible and there are things impossible; what you ask me to do is one of the things that are impossible." Upon this, Disraeli turned to Dean Stanley, and said: "You see what it is—the wrath, the inexorable wrath, of Achilles."

In one general sense Gladstone and Disraeli were alike. Both had been intensely ambitious, and both had succeeded. For a time, in 1878, and afterwards, Beaconsfield was a power in Europe, and his name ranked with that of Bismarck as a really great statesman. And there is no doubt that this was a subject, as it well might be, of honourable satisfaction to himself. But Mr. Gladstone's name is much more of a household word throughout English-speaking countries than his rival's ever was or will be. In more than one European country it also rings like a liberty bell, and finds echoes far back in history. It is more than interesting now to note how anxious many Greeks were, in 1862, to place William Ewart Gladstone upon their vacant throne. Writing from Athens, on October 31st of that year, to Edward A. Freeman, a correspondent, Mr. Finlay, the historian, says:

> "The best thing the Greeks could do would be to elect Mr. Gladstone King. He has all of the qualities, and some of the defects, they want, which would make the better King of Greece. Enthusiasm, eloquence, classic learning—enough to confound the Professors—elevation of mind and rectitude of principle, and, or I mistake, promptitude and energy of action."

Another correspondent named F. H. Dickenson, writing on November 10th, observed that "there were no protocols to prevent Gladstone being made king. That would be much the best thing, as he has the personal qualities they want." Mr. Freeman replied to the first, that "your notion of choosing Gladstone King of Greece took me a little by surprise, but I have been thinking about it. . . . I am urging Dickenson to advocate Gladstone's election himself." Such talk, and there was much of it, shows how profound an impression the Ionian Islands matter had made upon the susceptible minds of the people of Greece, and hence upon their English friends.

But those days of rivalry and alternate power are gone forever, though the memory of great men who served their country honestly, if antagonistically, can never be forgotten. And perhaps one of the most graceful compliments ever paid Lord Beaconsfield, and one of the most creditable and gracious of Mr. Gladstone's oratorical efforts, was his brief eulogy of the Conservative leader in the House of Commons, when moving—May 9th, 1881—the erection of a monument in Westminster Abbey to the man whom the United Kingdom was mourning, and against whom he had so often marshalled his party hosts, and all the forces of political invective:

> "His extraordinary intellectual powers are as well understood by others as by me. But there were other great qualities; for example, his strength of will, his long-sighted persistency of purpose, reaching from his entrance on the avenue of life to its very close, his remarkable power of self-control, and his great Parliamentary courage. Sir, I wish to express the admiration I have always felt for those strong sympathies with his race, for the sake of which he was always ready to risk his popularity and influence. It is impossible to withhold the sentiment I feel with that brotherhood to which he justly thought that he was entitled to belong—the brotherhood of letters. There is another feeling—his profound, devoted, tender, grateful affection to his wife, which, though, as may be the case, it has deprived him of the honours of public obsequies, has in the public mind raised for him a more permanent regard as for one who knew, even amidst the temptations of public life, what was due to sanctity, and the strength of domestic affection, and who made himself an example in that respect to the country in which he lived."

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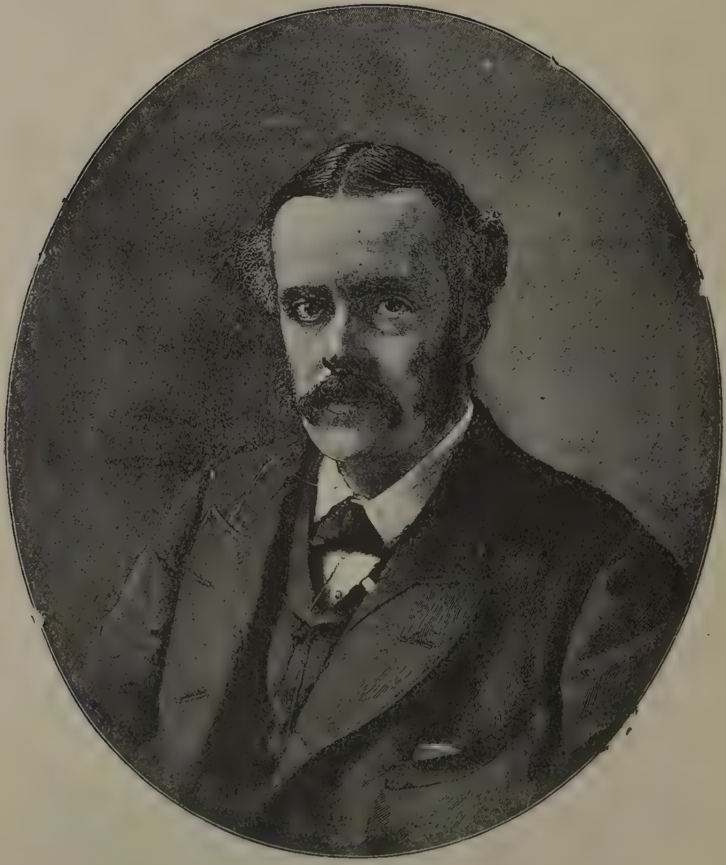
RIGHT HON. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.,

Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895.



RIGHT HON. ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR, M.P.,

Leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons, 1891-95.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE IRISH DRAMA.

WHEN Lord Salisbury formed his first Government, late in June, 1885, it was confessedly for the purpose of appealing to the country. Mr. Chamberlain termed it a "Stop-gap Ministry," and its position in face of a hostile majority and in preparation for a dissolution, which was to result in a popular defeat, has made the designation historic. Several new men came to the front with a bound in its composition. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was at the Exchequer, with the leadership of the Commons, and in succession to Sir Stafford Northcote, who went to the Lords as Earl of Iddesleigh. Lord Randolph Churchill became Secretary for India; Sir Richard Cross went to the Home Office again; Mr. W. H. Smith took the War Office; Mr. A. J. Balfour became President of the Local Government Board. Lord Salisbury assumed the Foreign Office as well as the Premiership.

Parliament was dissolved on the 18th of November, and Mr. Gladstone departed on a new Midlothian campaign. His journey northward was like a triumphal progress, and the multitudes thronging round his carriage, gathering at the railway stations, or listening at public meetings, heard a series of vehement, aggressive speeches. The new House met on January 12th, 1886, and was opened by the Queen in person. It was then found that Mr. Gladstone had 334 Liberals behind him, and Lord Salisbury only 250 Conservatives. But hovering between the two parties was a massed phalanx of 86 Home Rulers, under the clear, cool, leadership of Mr. Parnell. And the air was full of rumours. The Tories were said to be coquetting with Home Rule, and Lord Clarendon was afterwards charged with having made overtures, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to Parnell. This he emphatically denied. Mr. Gladstone was said also to be meditating a move which would change the application of a certain traditional sentence, and effectually "dish the Tories."

A couple of weeks after the House met, Mr. Jesse Collings moved his resolution in favour of agricultural allotments—the famous "three acres and a cow" policy—and the Government was defeated by 329 votes to 250. Lord Salisbury resigned, and, on February 1st, Mr. Gladstone formed his third Administration in the midst of myriad and conflicting rumours as to his intentions regarding Ireland. So heavy were these clouds of suspicion that Lord Hartington refused to join his leader, and so prominent a Liberal as Sir Henry James declined the Lord Chancellorship. Sir Farrer Herschell, however, accepted it with the usual peerage, and Mr. Chamberlain joined the Ministry under certain conditions, which were revealed afterwards. As principally composed, the Cabinet stood as follows:

Premier, First Lord of the Treasury, and Privy Seal	Mr. Gladstone
Lord Chancellor	Lord Herschell
President of the Council	Earl Spencer
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Sir William Harcourt
Secretary of State for Home Affairs	Mr. H. C. E. Childers
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs	Lord Rosebery
Secretary for the Colonies	Earl Granville
Secretary of State for War	Mr. H. Campbell-Bannerman
Secretary of State for India	Lord Ripon
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Mr. John Morley
Secretary of State for Scotland	Mr. G. O. Trevelyan
President of the Board of Trade	Mr. Mundella
President Local Government Board	Mr. Chamberlain

Outside of the Cabinet, the Earl of Aberdeen became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, while Mr. H. H. Fowler, Mr. James Bryce, Mr. Jesse Collings, and Sir Charles Russell were amongst those holding subordinate, but important, posts. For the moment there was a lull in the political storm, and every one seemed waiting to know what the new Premier intended to do with Ireland; and how he proposed to manage the band of triumphant Parnellites and the few dissentient, or rather hesitating, Liberals who as yet showed themselves on the surface of affairs. "But," said Mr. John Morley at a Liberal meeting, "I am not sure that it is not the calm of the glassy waters on the edge of the bend of Niagara." It was a perilous and unpleasant position for Mr. Gladstone. Whatever he did, the charge would be made that his action was guided by political contingencies, and not by personal convictions. The campaign just over had, indeed, produced many such allegations, and the campaigns to come were destined to make the hills and valleys of England ring with denunciation along this very line.

It is, however, not necessary to be a Home Ruler in order to feel that this charge is unjust. Something had to be done with Ireland. Coercion had been tried times without number. Conciliation had been attempted by Mr. Gladstone in his Irish Church policy, in his Land Law policy, in the brief and unsatisfactory olive branch held out by Lord Frederick Cavendish in 1882. To a statesman who had been in a continuous condition of political evolution from his youth upwards, it was not so very strange or difficult to take one more step in this Irish policy, and try the panacea of Home Rule. And to a leader who had during many years consistently and continuously laid stress upon the force which really popular demands should have upon national leaders, the spectacle of an overwhelming majority from Ireland asking for a certain line of action must have had a great and natural effect. It ought to be remembered also that while Mr. Gladstone had frequently opposed Home Rule leaders, had frequently denounced and legislated against Irish lawlessness, had opposed Parnell, and even depicted his policy as involving Imperial disintegration and national weakness, he yet had the right to look upon a vast question of this nature as one which has many sides, and is capable of varied treatment in accordance with constantly changing conditions.

Home Rule, like Imperial Federation, is, in fact, what you make it, and Mr. Gladstone thought then, and afterwards believed, with passionate sincerity and earnestness, that he could make it practicable, honourable, loyal, and beneficial. Speaking on March 5th, 1886, Lord Hartington clearly absolved his great leader and future opponent from this charge of adopting Home Rule in order to retain power:

> "I think," said he, "that no one who has read or heard during a long series of years the declarations of Mr. Gladstone on the question of self-government in Ireland can be surprised at the tone of his present declaration. Lord Randolph Churchill, himself an attentive student of Mr. Gladstone's speeches, can find no later date than 1871 in which Mr. Gladstone has spoken strongly against the demands of the Irish people for greater self-government. Well, when I look back to those declarations in his Midlothian speeches, when I look to the announcements which, however unauthorized and inaccurate, have never been asserted to be, and could not have been, mere figments of the imagination, but expressed more or less accurately, not the conclusions which Mr. Gladstone had formed, but the ideas which he was considering in his mind—I say, when I consider all these things, I feel that I have not, and that no one else has, any right whatever to complain of the tone of the declarations which Mr. Gladstone has recently made on this subject."

There seem, indeed, to have been three lines of thought concerning Ireland in the Liberal leader's mind during the years in which the Home Rule demand, as represented in Parliament, grew from the size of a shamrock in the hands of Mr. Butt, to a shrub in those of Mr. Shaw, and to the likeness of a tree under the clever manipulation of Parnell. At first, he felt that there was no proof of the incompetence of Parliament to manage the affairs of Ireland, and his legislation, from 1868 onwards, was largely devoted to indicating its ability and desire to do full justice to the Irish people. There was, consequently, no necessity for breaking up that Parliament and making dangerous experiments in the direction of Home Rule. But, as the complex cares of Empire increased, and the House of Commons found itself with an ever-growing burden of business and responsibilities, he apparently began to think that there might be something in the claim of inability.

Writing in 1878, in the *North American Review*, he declared that "the affairs of three associated kingdoms, with their great diversities of law, interest, and circumstance, make the government of them, even if they stood alone, a business more voluminous, so to speak, than that of any other thirty-three millions of civilized men. To lighten the cares of the central legislature by judicious devolution, it is probable that much might be done; but nothing is done, or even attempted to be done." A little later in the same year he pointed out, through the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*, that "for the last twenty years, in despite of the exertions of Governments and Parliaments, there has been a great, if not a constant, accumulation of arrears, and we have now reached the point at which it may almost be termed hopeless. It is unquestionably a point at which the discovery has been made that the merest handful of men may, if they have a sufficient stock of personal hardihood and indifference to those around them, avail themselves of the impeded state of the political traffic to stop altogether the chief of all the Queen's highways." And then he enumerated twenty-one important engagements which Parliament had been unable to redeem.

It thus appears that, seven years before he finally adopted Home Rule, Mr. Gladstone had discarded his first objection—the working competency of the Imperial Parliament to deal with local, Irish, and every other question. The second thought apparently felt, and certainly expressed in 1871, during a speech at Aberdeen, was the belief and impression that, so far as Ireland was concerned, there was neither a practical necessity nor an authoritative demand for vital changes in the Constitution of the United Kingdom. Parliament he still felt to be capable of governing Ireland; coercion had not yet broken down in its imperatively needed effort to maintain the laws; and Irish agitators had not yet stirred the people to make anything like a strong Parliamentary demand for other and different institutions. But time altered the situation of affairs. The dissatisfaction of Roman Catholic Ireland was soothed neither by disestablishment nor by reformed land laws, and, as a result of increased representation under the Franchise Act of 1884, and of Parnell's controlling power, the demand for Home Rule took constitutional—as well as unconstitutional—form and shape.

The third point in considering the subject was that of Irish loyalty. In the main, Mr. Gladstone does not seem to have opposed Home Rule from fear of this contingency. Stirred up by outbreaks of lawlessness, he had, at times, denounced the agitators, or the advocates of national independence, but their Parliamentary policy was, in addition to the above reasons, opposed because they had presented no practical scheme, and had proposed that, while dealing exclusively with Irish affairs, they should also have the power of dealing with English matters, through representation in the Imperial House. As far back as 1872, he had asked Mr. Butt to formulate a plan, and then opinions might be properly formed and expressed. Bearing this in mind, and also the fact that his first Home Rule Bill was to exclude Irish members from Westminster, the following extract from a speech at the Guildhall, in October, 1881, is significant:

"It is not on any point connected with the exercise of local government in Ireland; it is not even on any point connected with what is popularly known in that country as Home Rule, *and which may be understood in any one of a hundred senses*, some of them perfectly acceptable, and even desirable, and others of them mischievous and revolutionary —it is not upon any of these points that we are at present at issue. With regard to local government in Ireland, after what I have said of local government in general, and its immeasurable benefits . . . you will not be surprised if I say that I, for one, will hail with satisfaction and delight any measure of local government for Ireland, or for any portion of the country, provided only that it conforms to this one condition, that it shall not break down or impair the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament."

Looking back now, it seems reasonably certain that Mr. Gladstone would have carried his measure through the House of Commons, and eventually in England itself, but for one vital reason. The Irish themselves defeated Home Rule. Had the English people been as convinced of Irish loyalty as the veteran Premier was, the experiment would at least have been tried. But the utterances of many Parnellite leaders, the actions of Irish demagogues, the unwise articles in Irish and American newspapers, the disloyal speeches of Fenians and dynamiters, the outrages in Ireland itself, and the dynamite attempts in London, were all jumbled up in the popular mind, and seemed to indicate a situation of danger to England, and of disloyalty to the Crown, under any separate Parliament which might possibly be organized. It was this which chiefly neutralized the calm, statesmanlike attitude of Parnell in Parliament; which caused the secession of Liberals from the ranks, and defeated Mr. Gladstone in the House; which carried a wave of suspicion and fear through England, and defeated him in the country; which has since prevented the carrying out of his policy.

Had Ireland proved its loyalty and peacefulness in the years immediately preceding this event; had crime not "dogged the steps of the Land League"; had Parnell assumed in his own country the attitude he took in Parliament, and refrained from speaking of "Ireland's nationhood," or of the protection of Irish industries against English competition; had Messrs. O'Brien and Dillon, Healy and O'Connor, Brennan and Sullivan, refrained from their wild remarks about "hunting landlords," and civil war, and national independence, the Liberals of England would probably have stood unitedly for the Irish cause under the brilliant leadership of a veteran statesman. But every time that Mr. Sexton spoke of "the unchangeable passion of hate" existing between England and Ireland; or Mr. Deasy expressed his sympathy with Egypt and the Mahdi; or Mr. Redmond declared the people to be "all united in their hatred of England," a blow was given to the Home Rule cause, to its great champion upon the floors of Parliament, and to its English friends generally.

But the die was now cast, and on the 8th of April, 1886, occurred one of the most memorable and dramatic scenes in the history of England, or in the annals of its political and legislative action. Mr. Chamberlain and some minor members of the Government had already resigned, and the air was full of ominous mutterings of further party rebellion, when Mr. Gladstone rose in a densely crowded and intensely interested House to deliver one of his greatest orations; to try to turn the tide of British history; and to do what he sincerely and passionately believed to involve justice to Ireland. In his manifesto to the people preceding the late general election, he had declared his object to be the establishment of a thorough and enduring harmony between Ireland and England, and had expressed the belief that posterity and history would consign to disgrace, the name and memory of every man who did not use what power he had to bring about an equitable settlement of old-standing difficulties between the two countries.

And now, with hair whitened by nearly seventy-six years of life and struggle, he was presenting his elaborate scheme to a House partly sceptical, partly hostile, partly enthusiastic; and to a country which was more than doubtful. The chief provisions of the measure may be briefly summarized as follows:

I. An Irish legislature to sit in Dublin, with the Queen as its head; to consist of 309 members, 103 in the first Order—with property qualification, and elected on a £25 franchise—and 206 in the second Order; the two Orders to sit together, and, unless a separate vote is demanded, to vote together. If the two Orders disagree, the matter to be vetoed for three years. If then carried by the second Order, it shall be decided by a majority of both Orders.

II. The Lord Lieutenant to be appointed by the Crown, not as the representative of a party. His office not to be altered by the Irish Legislature; he to have power of assent or veto over any bill. The Executive to be constituted as in England. All constitutional difficulties to be settled by the Privy Council, whose decision shall be final.

III. The prerogatives of the Crown to be untouched. All matters concerning peace or war, foreign and colonial relations, trade, navigation, post and telegraphs, coinage, army, navy, and reserve forces, to remain in the hands of the Imperial Parliament.

IV. The Irish Legislature to be forbidden the endowment or establishment of any religion, or the restriction of religious freedom.

V. The customs and excise to be levied by the British Treasury; the rights of existing civil servants, judges, and other permanent officials and police, to be safeguarded; the new Legislature to ultimately raise and pay an Irish police force.

VI. The Irish members not to sit at Westminster, except when summoned back for special purposes. This Act not to be altered unless they are so summoned—28 to the Lords, and 103 to the Commons.

VII. Ireland to pay one-fifteenth as her portion of the interest on the National Debt, and of the charges on the Army, the Navy, and the Civil Service; also £1,000,000 toward maintaining the present Irish Constabulary until the date of its abrogation.

In his speech of three hours and a half, Mr. Gladstone covered a wide field of fact and controversy. After first referring to the Government's intention of dividing their proposals regarding Irish land and an Irish legislature into two separate and distinct measures, he proceeded to deal at length with the general question, and with the past relations of England and Ireland. He declared repressive legislation to be no longer possible: "Our ineffectual and spurious coercion is morally worn out," and quoted with approval Grattan's sentence regarding the Irish Legislature of 1782: "I demand the continued severance of the Parliaments, with a view to the continued and everlasting unity of the Empire."

He proposed, therefore, to establish this legislative body sitting in Dublin, with power to control purely Irish affairs, and under bonds for the security of the union with England, and the protection of the Protestant minority. In this latter connection, he observed: "I cannot allow it to be said that a Protestant minority in Ulster or elsewhere is to rule the question at large for Ireland. I am aware of no constitutional doctrine on which such a conclusion could be adopted or justified. But I think that the Protestant minority should have its wishes considered to the utmost practicable extent, in any form which they may assume." Continuing, and in great detail, the Premier dealt with various other features of his scheme.

But while Ireland was to have a domestic legislature, it was not to have Imperial representation. "I have thought much," said the speaker, "reasoned much, and inquired much, with regard to that distinction. I had hoped it might be possible to draw a distinction—and let Irish members come here and vote on Imperial concerns. I have arrived at the conclusion that it cannot be drawn. I believe it passes the wit of man; at any rate, it passes not my wit alone, but the wit of many with whom I have communicated" He vigorously denied that his policy would involve danger to the Empire and its unity. "Have you," he asked, "a braver or more loyal man in your army than the Irishman?" He eulogized local or national sentiment: "I hold that there is such a thing as local patriotism, which, in itself, is not bad, but good. . . . Englishmen are eminently English, Scotchmen are profoundly Scotch, and, if I read Irish history aright, misfortune and calamity have wedded her sons to her soil. The Irishman is more profoundly Irish, but it does not follow that because his local patriotism is keen he is incapable of Imperial patriotism." And then, a little later, his concluding words rang out through the House with a quiet intensity of conviction:

> "I ask that we should apply to Ireland that happy experience which we have gained in England and in Scotland, where the course of generations has now taught us, not as a dream or a theory, but as practice and as life, that the best and surest foundation we can find to build upon is the foundation afforded by the affections, the convictions, and the will of the nation; and it is thus by decree of the Almighty, far more than by any other endeavour, that we may be able to secure at once social peace, the fame, power, and permanence of the Empire."

Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Hartington followed in long and able speeches, explanatory of their position and their antagonism to the policy of Home Rule as presented by the Premier. In concluding his reply, Mr. Gladstone asked whether the House would not make "one bold attempt to free Parliament for its great and necessary work, and to establish harmony by Irish laws for Ireland, or . . . continue to struggle on as we have done before, living from hand to mouth, leaving England and Scotland to a famine of needful and useful legislation, and Ireland to a continuance of social disease and angry discord." A few days later, the Premier introduced his Irish Land Purchase Bill. It embodied, in a word—and through all the complicated and elaborate details of his speech and scheme—the buying out of Irish landlords for the benefit of Irish tenants by the use of English money raised upon Irish credit.

Upon the presentation of these two measures followed a storm of protests, a mass of meetings, and a period of Parliamentary doubt, and bitter, historic debate. During the recess, the leaders addressed large gatherings—notably, Mr. Bright, Mr. Chamberlain, and Lord Hartington. Mr. Gladstone rested in preparation for the further struggle, but addressed a manifesto to the electors of Midlothian, in which he declared that the classes were arranged against the masses upon this vital question. On the 10th of May the second reading of the Government of Ireland Bill was moved by the Premier in another lengthy and impassioned speech. Two days afterwards a meeting of Liberals was held at Mr. Chamberlain's house, and it was announced that over a hundred would oppose the measure when it came to a vote. After this the Liberal Unionists were organized, and it became evident that the measure and the Government were alike doomed.

One last great effort was made by the indomitable Premier to win back his supporters, but it was a hopeless one. On the 8th of June the division was to take place, and Mr. Gladstone to make this concluding speech. He came into the House, which was crowded in every part, with a white rose in his buttonhole, and a face as white as the rose. The cheers with which he was greeted had not the depth of those that he was accustomed to, and seemed to accentuate the loneliness of his position. But, right or wrong in policy; winning or losing in the fight now drawing to a temporary end; he seemed the greater for that memorable struggle—all but single-handed—against the ablest men in the Liberal party, and the united hosts of Conservatism. If he had won the battle, it would have been the victory of a great personality; as it was, he would lose only after an unequalled display of unconquerable courage, dexterity, resource, and debating skill.

It is useless describing the speech. The Premier and every one else knew that the division was going against him, but he had a fervent expectation of future triumph. Still, he spoke with all his power, and with a voice which retained much of its old ringing clearness. When he neared the end, the interest became intense. Let Mr. G. W. Smalley's words of eloquent description, as sent to the New York *Tribune*, speak in this connection :

> "Everything else was forgotten in the peroration. With a sustained splendour of diction, and dignity of thought and feeling, Mr. Gladstone held the House for, perhaps, a quarter of an hour completely in his grasp. As sentence followed sentence, each in the same lofty key, each seeming to reach the oratorical climax, which still receded farther and farther, the hearer thought each sentence must be the last. But on and on went the orator, his voice more melodious, his manner more impressive, his eloquence even more pathetic. He silenced his Tory opponents. Not one of them cared to lose a note of that incomparable voice as it rose and fell in musical cadence amid the deep hush that had come upon the House. The oldest member had heard nothing equal to this; the youngest cannot hope that it will ever be heard again."

Then came the first verdict of Parliament upon the proposed policy. The bill was rejected by 341 votes to 311, and, amid wild Tory cheers, faint Liberal echoes, and angry shouts of scorn and defiance from the Irish members, every eye turned to where sat the leader in this great political drama. Witnesses declare that Mr. Gladstone was visibly affected by the majority, that he had counted on ten, perhaps even a score more, but that the actual majority staggered him, and shook his confidence to the earth, and made his appearance that of a man suddenly aged by some severe blow or serious loss. Peel had broken his party in twain over the Corn Laws, but he had won a great victory, and carried a measure of signal importance. Gladstone had not carried his whole party with him upon the Reform Bill, and his great rival succeeded where he had failed. But since that time he had won victory after victory, had dominated Parliament and the people, had carried Bills of the utmost import, and had forced the Liberals—as in the Eastern Question—to follow him whether they would or not. And now his party had failed him at this critical and vital moment.

But the veteran's spirit quailed before the storm for only a brief moment. It was not without cause that so many people had called him the Grand Old Man; and perhaps he had never given better reason for that designation than in the gallant way in which he endured this signal rebuff. On every side friends were changed to enemies. Against him in the division list were men whom no height of imagination could have conceived in such a position one year before. John Bright and Joseph Chamberlain, the Marquess of Hartington and George J. Goschen, Leonard H. Courtney and Sir Henry James, Sir John Lubbock and George Otto Trevelyan, Sir Donald Currie and Edward Heneage, voted and worked against their old leader, while in the Lords, veteran Liberals, such as the Duke of Argyle and the Earl of Northbrook, joined the Unionist ranks. It was a Liberal Waterloo, and about 100 members in the House had opposed the measure, to 228 who voted for it.

Yet four days later, Mr. Gladstone had prepared to appeal to the country on his Irish policy, and had issued a Manifesto, in the form of an address, to the electors of his Midlothian constituency. In this document, he declared the issue before the nation to be of the gravest, and yet simplest, nature. Taking it for granted that coercion had been, and was still, the Conservative policy, he denounced it as unjustifiable, and doomed to disgraceful failure: "When summoned by Her Majesty to form a new Cabinet, I undertook it on the basis of an anti-coercion policy, with the fullest explanation to those whose aid I sought as colleagues that I proposed to examine whether it might not be possible to grant to Ireland a domestic legislature under conditions such as to maintain the honour and consolidate the unity of the Empire." And then he proceeded to handle his antagonists without gloves. "Our opponents," he observed, "whether Tories or Seceders, have assumed the name of Unionists. I deny their title to it. In intention, indeed, we are all unionists alike, but the union which they refuse to modify is, in its present shape, a paper union, obtained by force and fraud, and never sanctioned or accepted by the Irish nation. They are not unionists, but paper unionists. A true union is to be tested by the sentiments of the human beings united. Tried by this criterion, we have less union between Great Britian and Ireland now than we had under the settlement of 1782."

He concluded his Manifesto by a brief summary of the benefits anticipated from an acceptance of his policy:

> "The consolidation of the unity of the Empire and a great addition to its strength; the stoppage of a heavy, constant, and demoralizing waste of public treasure; the abatement and greater extinction of ignoble feuds in Ireland, and that development of her resources which experience shows to be the natural consequence of free and orderly government; the redemption of the honour of Great Britain from a stigma fastened upon her from time immemorial in respect to Ireland by the judgment of the whole civilized world; and, lastly, the restoration to Parliament of its dignity and efficiency, and the regular progress of the business of the country."

From this time on the battle raged fiercely, and unceasingly, until the middle of July. Mr. Gladstone spoke in Edinburgh early in the fight, and pleaded earnestly for the closing of a painful chapter in English history, and for support to "a happy, if not holy, effort to obtain happiness and justice for Ireland." Lord Salisbury and Lord Hartington, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Parnell, and Mr. Chamberlain took an active part, and the struggle soon became more and more marked as one between the Liberal Premier's great personality and a host of hostile influences and leaders. It was one against many, and, without going too closely into the reasons—one of the chief being the past utterances and claims of Mr. Parnell's followers—the many triumphed. In the final result some 316 Conservatives were returned, 191 Home Rule or Gladstonian

Liberals, 78 Liberal-Unionists, and 85 Irish Home Rulers. The hostile majority was thus more than a hundred, and on July 22nd Mr. Gladstone submitted his resignation to the Queen. Lord Salisbury at once formed his second Administration, and drew down the curtain upon the first act in a great drama.

Mr. Gladstone was for the time, and beyond all doubt, the best hated and the best loved of any man in the United Kingdom. The passions of the nation had been aroused over this question as had seldom been the case before in all its modern history. The susceptible Irish could not find enough laudation for him, and the Liberals who had stood by their leader through thick and thin had fully proved their devotion. Americans, as a rule, were profuse in expressions of admiration, while other foreigners and the people of the external Empire seemed divided in sentiment. Conservatives and Irish Protestants, however, were intense in their expressions of aversion for the leader who had, in their opinion, tried to break up the Empire in order to gratify his powerful personal ambition. As a rule, the wealth and the aristocracy of England stood opposed to him, and at this moment a large part of the masses, as well as the classes, were in the same position.

They looked upon the policy he had proposed as one which would result in separation or civil war; in Irish administrative weakness; in the imposition of intolerable burdens upon the people of England; in grievous injustice to the Loyalists of Ireland; in future and unlimited extension of the measure which Mr. Gladstone now suggested in good faith, as being reasonably final in its terms. The proof they advanced for these assertions was the known inefficiency of the Irish members at Westminster in all matters of practical legislation; their intensely quarrelsome dispositions, as evinced in fights over local issues, and by interminable personalities indulged in at moments when their own cause depended upon unity and self-abnegation; their hatred of England, as expressed upon countless Irish platforms, and in speeches from which every variety of wild denunciation or bigoted folly could be quoted at pleasure.

And, to sincere Home Rulers, it must have been exceedingly painful to see their cause damaged, and, in the end, destroyed, by these faction fights, violent utterances, and aimless discontents. At a moment when their champion in England had sacrificed his Government for their principles, and was preparing to enter upon six years of intense labour for the sake of Home Rule; when he had spent all his eloquence and influence in vouching for the genuine loyalty of the Irish people; papers like the *Irish World*, of New York, would urge them not to accept this measure as a final settlement—"not to be in a hurry to mortgage Irish nationality." A sense of gratitude has always been supposed to be that one of the kindly virtues which is most deeply imbedded in the heart of every true Irishman. But it did not show itself during these and succeeding years in any practical form. Boundless personal enthusiasm there would at times be, and personal expressions of regard and admiration, which, no doubt, Mr. Gladstone appreciated. But, except in isolated cases, and under the cool management of Parnell, there was not the energetic, united, intelligent co-operation, which the Liberal leader deserved, and had a right to expect.

His object was quite difficult enough of accomplishment as things stood. To engraft a federal system upon a legislative union, and to apply it in one part of the United Kingdom without using it in the others, was one of the most complicated pieces of constitutional labour ever undertaken by a statesman. But he had now made one gallant and determined attempt in that direction, and, despite party disruption and popular disapproval, he proposed to continue until fortune, with its proverbial fickleness, should once more favour and smile upon his cause.

* * *

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SALISBURY GOVERNMENT.

LORD SALISBURY soon formed his Administration. What little delay there was resulted from an effort at coalition with the Liberal-Unionists, who had contributed so greatly to the defeat of the Home Rule proposals. The Conservative leader offered to serve under Lord Hartington as Premier, but the overture was declined, and for this Parliament the two sections of the Unionist party remained distinct in name, though, ultimately, very much united in policy. Lord Randolph Churchill, whose rapid rise had been so phenomenal, was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House, but was destined to hold office for only a few brief months. In the succeeding January he abruptly resigned, and was replaced by Mr. Goschen at the Exchequer, and by Mr. W. H. Smith in the leadership—the latter taking an honorary post in the Cabinet instead of the War Office, which he had at first held.

Sir Stafford Northcote became Earl of Iddesleigh, and was, for a short time, Foreign Secretary, until the somewhat tragic incidents surrounding his death occurred, when Lord Salisbury took charge of the department for which he was so pre-eminently fitted. Lord Halsbury (Sir Harding Giffard

of other days) became Lord Chancellor; Mr. H. Matthews, Home Secretary; Mr. E. Stanhope, Colonial Secretary. The latter was succeeded in 1887 by Sir H. Holland—afterwards Lord Knutsford. Viscount Cross took the India Office; Lord George Hamilton the Admiralty; Lord Ashbourne became Lord Chancellor of Ireland; and, for a brief period, Sir M. Hicks-Beach took the Irish Secretaryship. When he resigned, in 1887, owing to ill-health, Mr. A. J. Balfour accepted the difficult post, and leaped to the front with a bound which exceeded in speed and success the rise of even Lord Randolph Churchill. Lord Stanley of Preston—shortly afterwards Governor-General of Canada—Lord John Manners, Lord Cranbrook, Lord Cadogan, and Mr. C. T. Ritchie, were also included in the Cabinet.

Lord Salisbury was now Premier with a large majority in his favour, and a disorganized Opposition against him. He had become, during the last few years, a powerful, as well as a picturesque, personality, and had won the respect of his party not only for staunch, old-fashioned Toryism, but for able and careful management. The feeling of almost collapse which had existed for some time after Lord Beaconsfield's death was gone; the great chieftain's masterful spirit seemed to have inspired and filled once more the ranks of the party he had practically created. The Primrose League had revived the enthusiasm of Conservatives at the same time that it kept alive the memory of their former leader; and not the least of the influences which had defeated Mr. Gladstone in the English constituencies was the organization which thus commemorated the life and policy of his old-time rival. Curiously enough, too, one of the last speeches in the House against his Home Rule Bill had been made by Mr. Coningsby Disraeli, a young man who, in language thoroughly characteristic of his great uncle, had declared the measure to be "born in deceit, nurtured in concealment, swaddled in the gag, and now forced upon the country without the consent of the people."

The new Premier, at the age of fifty-six, was thus to have a full and fair chance of governing the Empire. Ireland, it is true, might block the way somewhat, and cause more or less of difficulty, but the obstacle was not insurmountable, nor was Lord Salisbury the man to fear any force or any foe, if the path of duty appeared clear and distinct before him. And he made the most of his opportunity. In a Parliament and a party which boasted Lord Randolph Churchill, and saw the rise of Mr. Balfour, he stood pre-eminent for strength of character, and for a sort of massive ability which suited well with his powerful and imposing physique. His speaking is described as remarkable for clearness, vigour, keenness of argument, and a commingling of cynicism and sarcasm which add greatly to its interest. Lord Lytton, in his poem, "Glenaveriel," has a clever verse descriptive of the Conservative leader as he appeared at this time:

"What stately form in that historic hall,
Now rising as the expectant cheer ascends,
Stoops the swayed outline of its stature tall,
And o'er the box upon the table bends
Brows mighty with stor'd thoughts about to fall
In unpremeditated speech, that blends
Slow-gathering forces in its wave-like spell?
Behold Cæcilius, and observe him well."

Mr. Gladstone, for the moment, was, perhaps, not considered a very important factor in the situation. As in 1874, Conservatives were prone to think that he had fought his last fight, and that the "Grand Old Man" had been finally and decisively beaten in a cause which could never be revived. The *Times* declared that it was impossible for him to ever again bring his Irish policy to the front, and he himself wrote to Mr. Arnold Morley, the Liberal whip, that "Even apart from the action of permanent causes, the strain of the last six years upon me has been great, and I must look for an opportunity of some change and repose, whether in or beyond this country." Yet within a brief period he had inaugurated with voice and pen, in Parliament, in the press, and upon the platform, a vigorous and exuberant campaign on behalf of his defeated, but not abandoned, idea. And from the opening of Parliament until its close in 1892, when he stood upon the threshold of his eighty-fourth year, this marvellous struggle was steadily maintained.

The achievements and really important events of the Salisbury Administration may be quickly summarized. Foreign and Colonial policy was a naturally important feature. France and Egypt, the United States and the Behring Sea question, together with complications in Central and Southern Africa, were dealt with strongly and firmly. Nearly two million square miles of territory were added to the Empire in the Dark Continent, and, by the Colonial Conference of 1887, an impetus was given to the practical unification of the Colonies and the Mother Country. A memorable event in this connection was the celebration throughout the British world of the Queen's Jubilee. It was indeed a most remarkable manifestation of loyalty, and the evidence of a sentiment of union which seemed to permeate every portion of the vast territory now peopled by 350,000,000 subjects owning allegiance to Her Majesty, and living under the sheltering folds of the British flag. And not the least interesting feature of the time was an oration upon the Queen's beneficent reign, delivered by Mr. Gladstone late in August, 1887. A little later, a new Land Act was carried in connection with Ireland, and Mr. Ritchie succeeded in presenting and carrying through the House of Commons an elaborate scheme of local government for England and Wales. A similar proposal was formulated for Ireland in the session of 1892, but opposition and the pressure of other matters compelled its abandonment. Education was also made free to the people at large by removal of the fee system. The central party question of the period was, of course, the charge made by the *Times* against Mr. Parnell, followed not long after by the Irish leader's domestic troubles and political downfall. Of almost equal import was Mr. Gladstone's famous Newcastle speech, and the presentation of what has ever since been called "the Newcastle programme" to the Liberal party, and the people at large.

With the Foreign policy of the Government, Mr. Gladstone did not greatly interfere, and, when Lord Rosebery succeeded the Conservative Premier at the Foreign Office in 1892, he announced "continuity of policy" to be his line of action, so far as its management was concerned. But with Irish matters, the Liberal leader remained very closely connected during these years. In August, 1886, he published a pamphlet, entitled "The History of an Idea," in which he traced the growth of the Home Rule principle in his own mind, and the development of opinion in the direction of what he now felt to be its absolute necessity and desirability. A couple of months later, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Dublin, accompanied by large deputations, presented him, at Hawarden Castle, with a congratulatory address signed by nearly half a million Irish women, together with the freedom of the municipalities of Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Clonmel.

Early in January, 1887, a prolonged effort was made to reunite the opposing wings of the Liberal party. Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation had just withdrawn the most progressive element from the Administration, and seriously alarmed Mr. Chamberlain. Speaking to his constituents at Birmingham, the latter declared that "the old Tory influence has gained the upper hand in the Government, and we may find ourselves face to face with a Tory Government, whose proposals no consistent Liberal will be able to support." And then he expressed the belief that sitting round a table, and guided in a spirit of conciliation and compromise, the situation might prove capable of adjustment in the direction of Liberal unity. Mr. Gladstone seized the opportunity, and at once wrote Sir William Harcourt:

> "I consider the recent speech of Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham to be an important fact, of which due account ought to be taken. I think that, if handled on all sides in a proper spirit, it ought to lead to what I might term a *modus vivendi* in the Liberal party. I should be very glad if any means could be found for bringing about a free discussion of the points of difference, with a view to arrive at some understanding for such common action as may be consistent with our respective principles, or, at least, of reducing to a minimum divergencies of opinion on the Irish question in its several parts and branches."

The result of this communication was the series of meetings commonly styled the Round Table Conference. They were held at the house of Sir

William Harcourt, and were attended by Mr. Gladstone, Mr. John Morley, Lord Herschell, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Trevelyan, and Sir William, himself. Ultimately, the negotiations failed, but they had several important consequences. They made the separation between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain final and complete; they drew the latter once more into close union with Lord Hartington; and they swung Mr.—now Sir George—Trevelyan back to his old-time allegiance. Meanwhile, Mr. Goschen had joined the Administration, although other Liberal-Unionists, such as Lord Northbrook and the Marquess of Lansdowne, had declined to do so. Mr. Balfour also became Secretary for Ireland, and, in what appeared to be a weak state of health, undertook a task which had, so far, broken many reputations and made none. On March 7th, the *Times* commenced its publication of the memorable series of articles entitled "Parnellism and Crime," which were intended to politically destroy Parnell, and to prove the Land and National Leagues to have been founded upon a system of wholesale intimidation. The success of the second part of this programme was afterwards, more or less, completely wiped out of public recollection by the signal failure of the first.

Two months later Mr. Gladstone moved the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee to investigate these allegations, but the proposal was resisted by the Government. And then for many months the question dragged through different phases and multitudinous discussion until the appointment of the Parnell Commission. That body was sitting in the Courts of Justice one eventful morning in the spring of 1889 when the news flashed through London and into Parliament that Pigott, the witness upon whom the *Times* depended to prove the authenticity of its personal charges against the Home Rule leader, had fled, and was in fact, a common forger. An amendment to the Address had just been moved in the House by Mr. Morley, in terms of direct censure upon the Government for its Irish policy, and a speech was expected from Mr. Gladstone. Great interest was therefore felt in what he might say, and the elation of Liberals generally at the apparent collapse of the charges against Mr. Parnell was very clearly expressed in their leader's manner as he rose to speak.

With characteristic good taste, however, he avoided reference to the Special Commission, and refused to join in the personal attacks upon Mr. Balfour, which were just then the order of the day. But he made a strong and hopeful appeal for an abandonment of coercion, and the adoption of a bold and generous method of dealing with Ireland. In concluding, he said, with an energy and enthusiasm which was typical of the feeling of confidence now growing once again amongst his followers: "You may deprive of its grace and of its freedom the act you are asked to do, but avert that act you cannot. To prevent its consummation is utterly beyond your power. It seems to approach at an accelerated rate. Coming slowly, or coming quickly, surely it is coming. And you yourselves, many of you, must in your own breasts be aware that already you see in the handwriting on the wall the signs of coming doom." And a little later a dramatic event occurred. Mr. Asquith had just concluded one of those strong felicitous speeches which were fast winning him high place in the list of coming Liberals, when Mr. Parnell entered the House and took an obscure seat. A storm of Irish cheers announced his presence, and Mr. Gladstone, standing up before the House, turned with a welcoming countenance towards the representative and leader of Home-Rule Ireland. In a moment the other Liberal leaders, with the exception of Lord Hartington, stood to the right and left of their chief, and the resounding cheers of an English party greeted an Irish leader for the first time in English Parliamentary history.

Perhaps the mutations of life and politics were never better illustrated than in what had preceded this crowning event in the career of Charles Stewart Parnell, and by what followed it not long after. Some eight years before this moment, he had been hopelessly trying to address the House, had been several times "named" by the Speaker, had declared himself "subject to menaces from members of the House," and had even moved that "the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) be not heard." To-day, he was received with public acclaim by the Liberal party in the full face of the political world. A year and a half afterwards, the disclosures connected with Captain O'Shea's action for divorce had damaged his personal reputation to such an extent as to make it necessary for him to consider the question of resigning the leadership of the party he had so long and so ably managed.

Naturally, a man who had won for himself the name of "the uncrowned king of Ireland" hesitated. He would have been more than human had he not done so. And the more he hesitated, the more awkward became Mr. Gladstone's position. The offence which had been charged and proven against Mr. Parnell was of a kind particularly unpleasant to the Nonconformists, and to the bulk of the Liberal party. And, more important still, it was of a character almost unendurable to a deeply religious and moral nature such as that of Mr. Gladstone. But action on the part of the latter would probably—as it in the end did—break up the compact and aggressive Irish party, which now promised to be of great service to him. And it might delay the realization of Home Rule by raising up more of those faction fights which had already proved such a curse to Ireland, while, at the same time, affording an excuse for the abandonment of constitutional agitation, and a return to those methods which had also been, to so great an extent, the bane of his cause and a fatal hindrance to English effort. After careful consideration, however, he took the course outlined in the following letter, dated November 24th, 1890, and addressed to Mr. John Morley:

> "While clinging to the hope of a communication from Mr. Parnell, to whomsoever addressed, I thought it necessary, viewing the arrangements for the commencement of the session to-morrow, to acquaint Mr. McCarthy of the conclusion at which, after using all the means of observation and reflection in my power, I had myself arrived. It was that, notwithstanding the splendid services rendered by Mr. Parnell to his country, his continuance at the present moment in the leadership would be productive of consequences disastrous in the highest degree to the cause of Ireland. I think I may be warranted in asking you, so far to explain the conclusion I have given as to add that the continuance which I speak of would not only place many hearty and effective friends of the Irish cause in a position of great embarrassment, but would render my retention of the leadership of the Liberal party, based, as it has been, mainly upon the prosecution of the Irish cause, almost a nullity."

Then ensued the historic scenes in the Irish Committee Room, when Parnell, refusing to resign, was faced by a furious majority of his followers, and by the sudden news of Mr. Gladstone's final decision. For the moment, his unique power of dictatorship triumphed, and the question of retirement was adjourned. But ultimately the party broke into pieces, and, after a spasmodic interval of intense effort to retain his old ascendency amongst the people of Ireland, Mr. Parnell passed away, and closed in death his strange, chequered, and memorable career. That the fall of the Irish leader was a blow to the Liberal party at the time there can be no doubt, but Mr. Gladstone's chief comment upon Parnell's desperate and pathetic struggles to recover himself were: "Poor fellow, poor fellow." For the moment, however, as the *Times* triumphantly remarked, "the solid phalanx of Nationalist votes, which has been Mr. Gladstone's steadiest backing since 1886, has been shattered to pieces." And there were not wanting those who declared that the Liberal leader was so disgusted as to be meditating personal retirement from the field.

His speech on the second reading of the Religious Disabilities Bill in December, 1890, was a sufficient answer to any such thought or statement, even if the everyday life of a public man, who seemed to live at a continuous white heat of varied labour, had not in itself been enough. The proposal which he thus presented to the House involved the removal of the restriction by which Roman Catholics are excluded from the Woolsack and the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. It was not accepted, but the occasion was remarkable for a speech which in its qualities of voice, dignity of delivery, and vigour of argument, ranked with his best utterances. A listener has since said that it was alone enough to establish a Parliamentary reputation for any other man. And when it is remembered to have been merely an incident of a busy session, a sort of pleasure excursion into the realms of oratory upon a personally congenial theme, the striking nature of the octogenarian effort may be appreciated.

Apart from passing political troubles and the ordinary exigencies of a leader's Parliamentary life, this seems to have been a pleasant, and even placid, period for the Liberal chief. Mr. Gladstone would at this time do a large amount of miscellaneous work before he came down to the House, then devote himself to the routine work of leadership and perhaps deliver an important speech, winding up the evening at some dinner, where he would be the centre of a circle of listeners, and deal easily, fluently, and pleasantly with almost any topic under the sun. After dining, he would, as a rule, walk home at a swinging pace, in preference to rolling lazily along in his carriage. The House he rarely attended at night, leaving the duties of leadership to be divided between Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Morley.

A keen critic of men and measures in the Commons has declared that at this period his personal preponderance was as great, if not greater than when he was in possession of an irresistible majority. While differences of political opinion remained as acute as ever, there seemed to be a distinct change in the personal relations existing between himself and the House. "If he is enthusiastically cheered by his partisans," said this observer, "the Ministerial majority sit in silent, respectful, attention, now and then not withholding the tribute of a cheer. Liberals, Conservatives, Unionists, whatever they be, the House is all one in admiration of the genius of the great Parliamentarian." A striking personal incident of the session of 1889, and one which clearly evidenced this state of affairs, occurred through the passing away of Mr. Bright. News of the event reached the House at a moment when Mr. Gladstone was absent, and it was at once felt by every one that it would be an irreparable loss should the great Liberal orator not be given an opportunity of paying a last tribute to his former colleague; one who had been his companion in so many and such memorable conflicts.

Mr. W. H. Smith, as leader of House, suggested, therefore, with great consideration and good taste, that the observations naturally called for by such an event should be postponed pending the arrival of Mr. Gladstone. The latter had been attending the funeral of his eldest brother, Sir Thomas Gladstone, but hurried up to town, and two days afterwards offered a fitting and eloquent tribute to the memory of his old friend and associate. He commenced by making a brief and tactful reference to the cause which had sundered the two in work and political thought. Mr. Bright, he observed, "had lived to establish a special claim to the admiration of those from whom he differed through a long political life by his marked concurrence with them on the prominent and dominant question of the hour. And while he had in that way additionally opened the minds and the hearts of those from whom he had differed to an appreciation of his merits, I believe he lost nothing in any portion of the party with which he had been so long associated of the admiration and the gratitude to which they felt him to be so well entitled."

Mr. Gladstone then referred to the purity which had characterized Mr. Bright in motive, speech, and action. He mentioned his conduct at the time of the Crimean war, when, with Cobden, he had faced the vast majority of the people, and, though nurtured in an atmosphere of popular approval and enthusiasm, had unhesitatingly opposed and denounced the conflict. "Up to that time," added the speaker, "we had known the great mental gifts which distinguished him; we had known his courage and consistency; we had known his splendid eloquence, which then was, or afterwards came to be, acknowledged as the loftiest that has sounded within the walls of the House of Commons for several generations. But we had not known till then how high the moral tone of those popular leaders had been elevated." Altogether, the eulogy was one befitting the subject and the orator—and no greater praise can be given. It has indeed been said that during many years preceding this period Bright and Gladstone were the two men of all others whom the House liked to hear upon occasions when memorial words were required, and it is also a curious fact that the latter was never more effective than in dealing with those who had been his special opponents—as, for instance, in his eloquent references to Lord Beaconsfield.

Meanwhile, several interesting occurrences had taken place in connection with Mr. Gladstone's popularity in the United States. Ever since he had taken up the Home Rule cause, the Liberal leader had been assured of a large following in the Republic; and the Irish people, living there in large and increasing numbers, came to look upon him with enthusiasm, if not affection. One result was the presentation, on July 8th, 1887, of a silver trophy by a deputation from New York, representative of a number of American admirers. Amongst those attending were Mr. Joseph Pulitzer, the well-known founder and proprietor of the New York *World;* Mr. Perry Belmont, then Chairman of the House of Representatives' Committee on Foreign Relations; Mr. P. A. Collins, a prominent New York Irishman, and others. Mr. Pulitzer, in making the presentation, said that 10,689 people of the first city in America asked the first citizen of England to accept this gift "as the offering of their sincerest sympathy, as a token of their personal admiration, and as a tribute to his great public services in the cause of civil and religious freedom." He went on to say that "the testimonial was tendered in the spirit of peace, not by the enemies, but by the friends of England's best interests."

In his reply, Mr. Gladstone spoke warmly of the help Ireland had received in days of famine and want from the United States; of the aid which had since come so copiously to the friends of Home Rule; of the kind personal appreciation he had himself always received in the Republic. And he concluded in words expressive of the most assured hopefulness:

"We must fight it out among ourselves as we have fought these things out before; and every struggle manfully engaged in has but one ending. The essence of things is not changed. The flame in the lamp of liberty is an undying flame, and whether it be to-day, or whether it be to-morrow, be it this year or be it next, you, gentlemen, and your great country, and the cause which you are assisting with your sympathy, and I believe also, as I have said, with some portion of your alms for the assistance of the people of Ireland—that cause is on its way to a triumph at which mankind at large, and British mankind most of all, will have reason to rejoice."

A little later, in September, 1887, an interesting correspondence was made public with reference to the celebration of the American Constitutional Centennial, and the invitation sent to Mr. Gladstone to be present. Early in the year arrangements had been made to celebrate at Philadelphia the hundredth anniversary of the American Constitution, with all suitable display and ceremony. The President of the United States was to preside, the chief memorial address was to be delivered by Mr. Justice Miller of the Supreme Court, and it was unanimously decided to invite, as the only foreign guest outside of the Diplomatic Corps at Washington, the English statesman who had at one time declared the Federal Constitution to be "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." At the meeting from which the invitation emanated, Mr. John A. Kasson, formerly member of Congress, and United States Minister at Vienna, said in the course of his speech: "We believe this communication cannot be without interest for the statesmen and people of England, from whom we sprang, and whose noblest principles of popular right and personal liberty were embodied in our great charter. In extending an invitation to be present to the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone, we desire the presence not only of a very eminent English statesman, but of one whose attendance will be a representation of that sturdy and persistent race of which our people are a part."

Mr. George W. Childs, the Philadelphia publisher and philanthropist, offered to provide all expenses of whatever nature and amount in connection with the proposed visit, and Mr. Gladstone was assured that he would be entertained as no man had been since the memorable reception of Lafayette. In his reply to the formal invitation, Mr. Gladstone expressed his warmest appreciation of the compliment paid him, with all its accessories of kindness and hospitality, and thus continued:

"Had I real option in the case, I could not but accept it; but the limitations of my strength and time, and the incessant pressure of my engagements, from day to day, make me too well aware that I have none. So far as I am able to foresee, or free to decide, the whole of the small residue of activity which remains at my command in connection with State affairs, is dedicated to the prosecution of a great work at home. I regard the Irish question as the most urgent in its demands, and as the most full of the promise of widely beneficial results for my country in which I have ever been engaged. I have, therefore, no remaining fund of time or capacity for public exertions, on which to draw."

In May, 1889, the Liberal leader received another American compliment in the form of an address signed by the Governor and other officials, the Senate, and all but two of the members of the House of Representatives in the State of Minnesota. A little later, Mr. Gladstone commenced a political tour through England and Wales, speaking at Southampton, Weymouth, Portland, Falmouth, Truro, Plymouth, and other places. In July he celebrated his golden wedding amid hosts of congratulations. A great reception was held in his honour at the National Liberal Club, and a most eulogistic address presented to him and to Mrs. Gladstone.

During these years, Mr. Gladstone expressed himself in many speeches upon many topics. His views regarding the proposals of Mr. Henry George—who had been lecturing in England—are of importance, and certainly do not lack distinctness. Speaking on September 23rd, 1889, he declared that "the nationalization of the land, if it means the simple plunder of the proprietors and sending them to the workhouse, is robbery." "I think," he continued, "nationalization of the land, with compensation, as far as I can understand it, would be folly, because the State is not qualified to exercise the functions of a landlord; and although there may be many bad and many middling landlords, yet, thank God, there are also many good landlords—even in Ireland some, and on this side of the Channel a good many. And the State could not become the landlord. It would overburden and break down the State."

Equally explicit was he with regard to Socialism, at the opening of a Workingmen's Library near Chester, on October 26th of the same year. "We live in a time," said the speaker, "when there is a disposition to think that the Government ought to do everything. . . . If the Government takes into its hands that which the man ought to do for himself, it will inflict upon him greater mischiefs than all the benefits he will have received. The essence of the whole thing is that the spirit of self-reliance, the spirit of true and genuine manly independence, should be preserved in the minds of the people, in the minds of the masses of the people, in the minds of every member of the class. If he loses his self-reliance, if he learns to live in a craven dependence upon wealthier people rather than upon himself, you may depend upon it he incurs mischief for which no compensation can be made."

Upon the perplexed question of limiting labour to eight hours a day, Mr. Gladstone repeatedly refused to commit himself. He pointed out to delegations, and at public meetings, that there was no unanimity of sentiment amongst the workmen themselves upon the subject, and that such a consensus of opinion was absolutely essential; that it would be an interference with individual freedom, and a hardship to many who were willing and able to work longer hours than the limit specified. On June 17th, 1892, a large deputation waited upon him, representative of many trades and interests, and besought him to take up the question favourably. But, although it was on the verge of a general election, and the chief spokesman assured him that such a declaration would mean many votes, he refused to move from the position just outlined, and dismissed the gathering with words which even his disappointed auditors thought honourable and conscientious in the extreme:

> "It is fair that I should say that, in my opinion, one of the very highest duties of all politicians, under all circumstances and at all points, is to eschew and to repudiate the raising of any expectations except what they know they can fulfil. Therefore, I say nothing more. I appeal to my life, I appeal to what I have hitherto viewed as my duty to the industrial classes, putting them in the position of standing up for their own right, and I say that what little future I have you must judge by the past. Beyond where I can see my way, and know how things are to be done, and under what conditions, I must not excite any expectations, even if I believed I could fulfil them, even if I held to the hope that I could fulfil them."

Speaking at West Calder, on the 23rd of October, 1890, Mr. Gladstone made an important reference to the great industrial and world-wide struggle of the day: "I like to look at the instruments which labour possesses for the purpose of carrying forward its competition with capital—I say, gentlemen, its competition with capital, not its conflict with capital. I think the word conflict, which one might be tempted to use, conveys an untrue impression. Labour and capital are in some respects opposed to one another—that is, they are partially opposed as to the division of the profit of production, but they are essentially and profoundly allied. I think it is very just to compare them to people rowing in a boat which has an oar on each side. . . . Their separate interests are little as compared with those in which they are united."

But his great speech during this period was that delivered at Newcastle on October 2nd, 1891. It was, in fact, a fresh and personal declaration of principles upon a great variety of subjects—a manifesto for the general elections of the succeeding year. Some of the propositions approved were referred to in very general terms, and not with a view to their immediate application. Amongst such subjects was the proposal for shortened Parliaments, the question of readjusting taxation as between different kinds of property, and the necessity of dealing with the House of Lords, should that body throw out a future Home Rule Bill, as Lord Salisbury had clearly indicated in a recent speech might be the case. Mr. Gladstone then expressed the earnest hope that the Premier would find some means of "relieving us from the embarrassing and burdensome occupation of Egypt," but went on to express general and generous satisfaction with the foreign policy of the Government as a whole:

> "We have striven to make the work of the present Administration in its foreign politics easy, because we think, as far as our information went—and we have been so tranquil on the whole subject that our information, I admit, is most partial—that its spirit has undergone a beneficial change, and that appeals to passion and to pride are no longer sent broadcast over the country, but that, on the contrary, a more just, more genial, and more kindly spirit has dictated the activity of Lord Salisbury. So, ladies and gentlemen, we have endeavoured to make his work, not difficult, but easy."

Such a tribute to any portion of the policy of a rival party is unusual, even in England, and it really marked the commencement of one of the most important events of modern party warfare—the recognition by both great national organizations of a common and continuous policy in the directing of foreign relations. And in the political changes which have occurred since this utterance took place, Lord Salisbury and Lord Rosebery have practically agreed to each carry on, in the main, the line of action previously adopted by the other. Mr. Gladstone then outlined the party policy in remarks which may be summarized under the following heads:

I. Home Rule and an Irish Parliament.

II. Reform of the laws regarding the liquor traffic in the direction of Local Option.

III. The principle of one man, one vote; reform of the registration, and of the existing Lodger franchise.

IV. Payment of members of Parliament, in order to promote labour representation.

V. Extension of the recent Conservative policy of County Councils, so as to establish District and Parish Councils.

VI. Reform of the land laws, and abolition of the system of entail.

This was a tolerably elaborate programme, and the speaker did not even pretend to hope that he would himself see the proposals all carried out. Indeed, writing to Lady Sherbrooke in August of the next year, upon the occasion of her husband's death—the Robert Lowe of many earlier struggles—he declared that "it cannot be long before I follow him." But he did hope to first carry Home Rule, and that policy was proclaimed in this speech, as it had been in countless deliverances since 1886, to be the pivot upon which everything else turned, and the central object of all his hopes and exertions. But events had been moving rapidly, and the general elections were soon imminent. Lord Salisbury spoke at Hastings in May, and hinted at protection as a possible Conservative policy in the future. There and at many places he and the other Unionist leaders joined in eulogizing Ulster for its stand against Home Rule, and to a certain extent presented the question as being between a religious minority and a religious majority. Protestant interests and welfare in Ireland, as against Roman Catholic domination, was to be, therefore, one of the chief issues of the campaign.

Parliament was dissolved on June 28th, 1892, and Manifestoes were at once issued by the Premier and Mr. Gladstone, by Mr. Balfour, Lord Randolph Churchill, and others. Lord Tennyson promulgated a unique one on his own account, and in the form of a brief reply to a correspondent:

> "SIR,—I love Mr. Gladstone, but hate his present Irish policy.
>
> "Yours faithfully,
>
> "TENNYSON."

It was short, but to the point, and was used to good purpose by the Conservatives. Mr. Gladstone's Manifesto consisted, as usual, of an address to the electors of Midlothian. He defined the Liberal policy as "a proposal to set both Parliament and Ireland free—Ireland for the management of her own domestic affairs by a local legislature in close sympathy with Irish life; and Parliament for the work of overtaking the vast arrears of business, and supplying, with reasonable despatch, the varied legislative wants of England, Wales, and Scotland." Home Rule, the alleged iniquity of the original Act of Union, the necessity of social reform, and the danger of Conservative coercion, were the main points discussed.

Lord Salisbury, in an "Address to the electors of the United Kingdom," pointed with pride to the Government's various reforms—the establishment of local government in Great Britain, the gift of gratuitous education, the relief of chronic suffering in Ireland. He claimed that the historic troubles of Ireland were due, not to bad government, or the union with England, but to differences in origin, race, and religion. And then he urged the people as a whole not to abandon the Loyalists of Ireland, and especially the Protestants of Ulster, "to the unrestrained and absolute power of those with whom they have been in conflict for centuries." The issue was thus placed clearly before the country, and Mr. Gladstone went down to Midlothian and delivered another series of addresses in that historic constituency.

The final result of the struggle was the selection of 269 Tories, 46 Liberal-Unionists, 274 Liberals, and 81 Irish Home Rulers. This gave a not very large majority of 40 against the Government, which was defeated by exactly that number as soon as the House met in August. Lord Salisbury at once resigned, and, for the fourth time, Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister. His success in the prolonged struggle thus ended was, in the main, due entirely to his own vast personal influence. His enthusiasm; his overmastering energy; his continuous eloquence; had obtained a Home Rule majority from Wales, Scotland, and Ireland—though not from England—in the face of Irish dissensions, and of repeated blows to the cause from those who should have been the source of its strongest support, and, individually, his most useful allies. It was the victory, though in the end a fruitless one, of a great personality over many and powerful obstacles.

MR. HENRY FOWLER
President of the Local Government Board.

MR. BRYCE
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

MR ACLAND
Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN
Secretary for War

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON
Secretary for the Colonies.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY
Secretary for India and President of the Council.

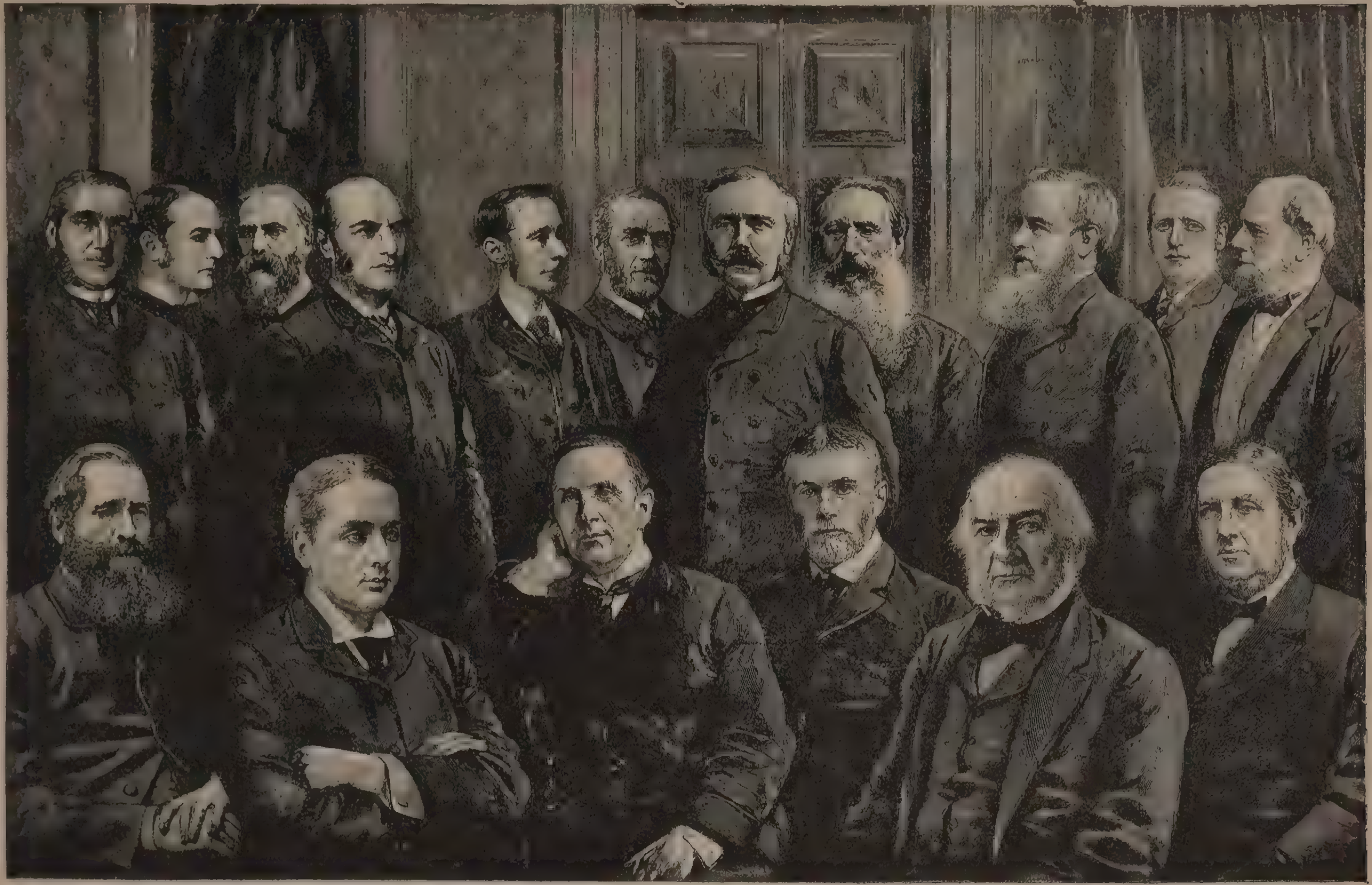
MR. ARNOLD MORLEY
Postmaster-General

LORD HERSCHELL
Lord Chancellor.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE
First Commissioner of Works.

MR. MUNDELLA
President of the Board of Trade.

MR. H. H. ASQUITH
Home Secretary.



MR. GLADSTONE'S FOURTH ADMINISTRATION: THE MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

EARL SPENCER
First Lord of the Admiralty.

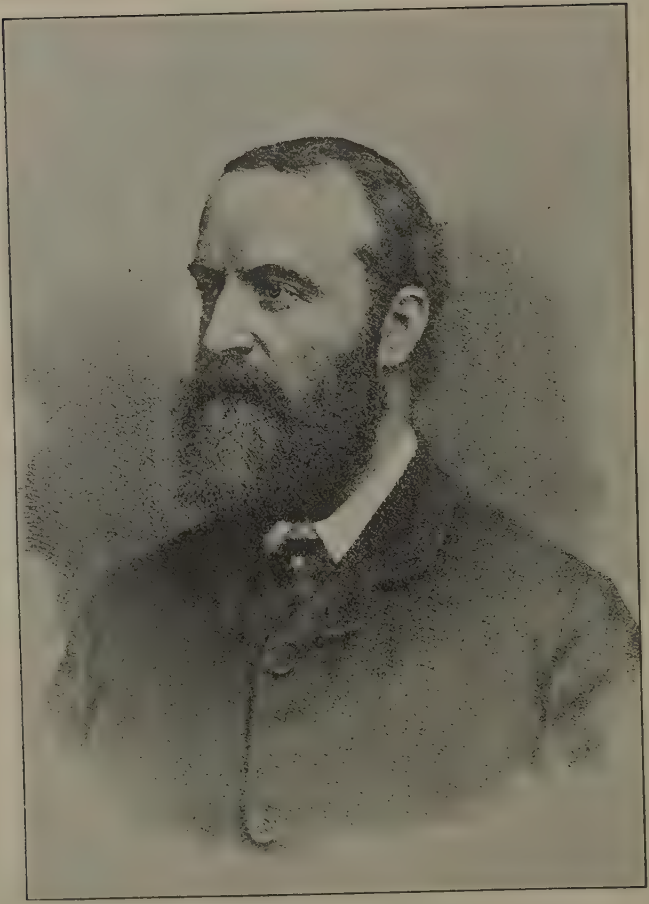
THE EARL OF ROSEBERY
Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

MR. JOHN MORLEY
Chief Secretary for Ireland.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN
Secretary for Scotland.

MR. GLADSTONE
First Lord of the Treasury and Lord Privy Seal.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT
Chancellor of the Exchequer.



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL, M.P.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MR. GLADSTONE'S FOURTH PREMIERSHIP.

THE new Ministry was formed with prospects not altogether pleasant. Another Home Rule bill was to be brought in as the first and foremost part of the Government's policy, and the majority in hand was small and disjointed for the carrying of so great a measure. And it was not a majority which would either awe or compel the Lords into accepting the bill, should it finally pass the Commons. In order to appreciate what afterwards happened, it must be borne in mind that the Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists combined had a majority of seventy-one in the constituencies of England, while the Gladstonians, or Liberals proper, and the Home Rulers generally, had a majority of twenty-six in Wales, thirty in Scotland, and fifty-seven in Ireland. The House of Lords could, therefore, claim, as they afterwards did, that the chief country in the United Kingdom was opposed to the Government's Irish policy.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Gladstone undertook the task, unique and without precedent in English history, of forming a fourth Administration. When finally constituted, the Cabinet stood as follows:

First Lord of the Treasury and Lord Privy Seal	Mr. Gladstone
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Herschell
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs	Earl of Rosebery
Secretary of State for India	Earl of Kimberley
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Marquess of Ripon
Secretary of State for Home Affairs	Mr. H. H. Asquith
Secretary of State for War	Mr. H. Campbell-Bannerman
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl Spencer
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Sir William Harcourt
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Mr. John Morley
Secretary for Scotland	Sir George Trevelyan
President of the Board of Trade	Mr. A. J. Mundella
President of the Local Government Board	Mr. H. H. Fowler
Postmaster-General	Mr. Arnold Morley
Vice-President of Committee of Council on Education	Mr. Arthur Acland
Chancellor Duchy of Lancaster	Mr. James Bryce
First Commissioner of Works	Mr. Shaw-Lefevre

Outside of the Cabinet the most notable appointments were those of Mr. Marjoribanks—afterwards Lord Tweedmouth, and one of the ablest "whips" the Liberal party has had for many years—as Patronage Secretary of the Treasury; Sir Edward Grey, as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs; and Sir Charles Russell, as Attorney-General. In forming his Ministry, Mr. Gladstone had encountered two obstacles—one vitally important, in the disinclination of Lord Rosebery to take any office; the other, insignificant, but very amusing, in the desire of Mr. Henry Labouchere for an office of some kind. There are few instances in English annals of so rapid a rise in power and popularity as was exhibited in the position of the Earl of Rosebery at this time. He had held a minor post in Mr. Gladstone's Ministry of 1880-85, and only in the last-named year had become a member of the Cabinet. And for a few troubled months in 1856 he was Foreign Secretary. But during the intervening period he seems to have grown in political stature, until a large portion of the Liberals looked upon him as the future leader, and, in the meantime, as an absolutely essential Foreign Secretary in any Liberal Cabinet.

This was a very quick development of character and reputation, but it appears to have been anticipated by Mr. Gladstone himself. Writing to the Midlothian Liberal Association, on June 27th, 1885, and during the general elections of that year, he said: "I rejoice that you meet under the presidency of my friend and colleague, Lord Rosebery, who is yet to play, if his life be spared, an important part in the politics of the United Kingdom." Speaking a year later at Manchester, he introduced the young Peer—then only thirty-nine years of age—as the youngest member of the Cabinet, and "the man of the future." Lord Rosebery's rise seems to have been due, first of all, to his skilful and delightful oratory; secondly, to his influence in Midlothian and in Scotland generally; thirdly, and perhaps chiefly, to his wide Imperial sympathies and intense devotion to the idea, and ideal, of British unity. His speaking was of a peculiar character. The language was polished and incisive to the utmost extent, and fairly sparkled with metaphor and epigram. His manner was very genial, but composed; his voice, round, resonant, and effective.

Possessed of great wealth and local popularity, he had made Dalmeny Park a centre of Scotch Liberalism during the years beginning with 1879, and Mr. Gladstone's first great Midlothian tour. It was there that the Liberal leader usually stayed, and from thence radiated the personal influence which so long kept Scotland devotedly in the party ranks. But the central point in Lord Rosebery's career had been his Imperial enthusiasm. For half a dozen years he was President of the Imperial Federation League, and his numerous speeches upon the desirability of close relations between England and her Empire have become classics in the literature of the movement. Speaking at Leeds, on October 11th, 1888, he pointed out that the foreign policy of England was now practically controlled by, and in connection with, Colonial matters, and that it was to the interest of the mother country to act in time, and in such a way, as to prevent any possibility of Colonial secession. If, for instance, Canada should desire to leave the Empire, and succeed in doing so, all the leading Colonies would soon follow its example. And then the speaker added, in characteristic language: "If you wish to remain alone in the world with Ireland, you can do so." The speech concluded with words which give a keynote to his policy and aspirations:

> "You cannot obtain the great boon of a peaceful Empire, encircling the globe with a bond of commercial unity and peace, without a sacrifice. You will have, as I think, to admit the Colonies to a much larger share in your affairs than you do at present. . . . The cause of Imperial Federation, for want of a better name, is worthy not merely of the attention of Chambers of Commerce, but of the devotion of the individual lives of the people of this country. For my part, if you will forgive me this little piece of egotism, I can say, from the bottom of my heart, that it is the dominant passion of my public life. Ever since I traversed those great regions which own the sway of the British Crown outside these islands, I have felt that it was a cause which merited all the enthusiasm and energy that man could give it. It is a cause for which any one might be content to live; it is a cause for which, if needs be, any one might be content to die."

But Lord Rosebery, despite the position he had won in the country, did not want to take office at this juncture. His health was affected by that most disastrous complaint—insomnia—and it required all the party and popular pressure which could be used to finally persuade him to take up the onerous duties of the Foreign Secretaryship. The other incident mentioned in connection with the formation of the Government was Mr. Labouchere's claim for consideration, and his ludicrous assertion that his omission from the Ministry was due to the personal intervention of the Queen. His position and his views alike rendered him unavailable for Ministerial office. The paper which he edited, and knew so well how to advertise, was a sheet which held high place as a purveyor of social scandal and political puerilities. He himself had for years flirted with republicanism, denounced royalty, misrepresented the Colonies, and scoffed at loyalty. Yet, personally, he was, and is, a man of assured reputation as a wit, a clever and charming companion, and a popular personality. So, while all England was laughing at his tilt with Mr. Gladstone over an invitation to join the Government which never came, it was done in a good-humoured way, and came as naturally as did the convulsive merriment of the House of Commons later in the session, when Dr. Wallace, a witty Scotch Liberal, congratulated "the Parliamentry Teetotum," as he called Mr. Labouchere, on the fact of his devotion to Mr. Gladstone being so great as to "require a special interposition of the Sovereign to prevent him from following the Prime Minister on to the Treasury Bench."

The new Government, however, was now in harness, and on January 31st, 1893, commenced a session which will be famous in history for its stormy debates; the unflinching will and strong personality of its central figure; the strength and ability with which the Opposition was led by Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain; the dramatic struggles of two great parties with passions inflamed to the uttermost, and held in bounds only by the individual predominance of the gentleman over the politician. Yet more than once this usually potent factor proved too weak to control the excitement of the debates, or limit properly the terms of speech. On the 13th of February, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Home Rule Bill for the second time, and after an interval of seven years. The aged Premier was in apparently unusually gay spirits, and in splendid health. As he drove up to the Parliament buildings in an open carriage, and accompanied by Mrs. Gladstone, he was received by a dense crowd of many thousand enthusiastic admirers. A perfect hurricane of cheers welcomed him, and were continued in a manner so warm and hearty as to evidently delight the uncovered and bowing leader.

The House itself was packed with members, while in the galleries were the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Princess Louise and Princess May, Mrs. and Miss Gladstone, Lord Rosebery, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Spencer, and a whole host of distinguished people and visitors from every part of the United Kingdom. As the Liberal leader entered, the impulsive Irishmen leaped to their feet, followed by the rest of the party, and cheered again and again, while even the Opposition looked almost sympathetically upon an act of hero-worship in which they could not share. When, shortly afterwards, the Premier rose to present his bill, a similar scene occurred, and, amid a volley of enthusiastic cheering, he commenced a speech which was remarkable for devotion to business-like explanation and close analysis, rather than to the use of oratorical opportunities and power. But towards the end he allowed his eloquence full rein.

The speaker began by claiming that now, as in 1886, the House and the country had arrived at a point in the relations with Ireland where two roads met—the one leading to a limited Irish autonomy, the other to coercion. He took the distinct ground that "a permanent system of repressive law inflicted upon or attached to a country from without, and in defiance of the voice and the judgment of the vast majority of its constitutional representatives," constituted a state of affairs which made harmony and good government impossible. In the second place, he stated that such a line of action was an absolute breach of the promises upon which the Union was originally obtained and based. He then dealt with the fact of England having given a majority against Home Rule, and pointed out that while, in 1886, that country returned 127 in favour to 338 against his policy, it now gave 197 to 268. And yet Lord Hartington had declared the former an "irrevocable verdict." In other words, the majority had declined from 211 to 71, and he asked the House what guarantee there was that even that majority would remain. If England refused to do justice to another partner in the Kingdom, he feared she would ultimately find her strength appreciably exhausted, and her work rendered more or less impracticable. But he desired to make no menaces:

> "I confess that, in my opinion—it may be an exaggerated opinion—the strength of England, taking its resources in connection with the substantive masculineness of the character of its people and their wonderful persistency in giving effect to the opinions they embrace, might maintain, if England were so minded, a resistance to the voice of all her partners—might maintain it for a time almost indefinite—spending her immeasurable energies in the manful, though disastrous, pursuit and sustentation of a bad cause."

Mr. Gladstone then went into the details of the bill, and the differences between it and the one presented in 1886. The important changes were:

I. The retention at Westminster of the Irish representatives.

II. A substitution of a Legislative Council and a Legislative Assembly, after the Colonial model, for the somewhat vague "Orders" of the previous measure. Both Houses were to be elective, though by differently planned constituencies, and were to sit separately.

III. The Customs duties were to remain under Imperial control, and be collected at Irish ports by Imperial officers, thus avoiding the complicated provisions of the previous bill relating to internal taxation for Imperial purposes.

But while the measure provided for the retention of Irish members in the Commons, Mr. Gladstone refused in his speech to favour the proposal. He specified its difficulties, and then threw the matter open for the House to pass upon. In concluding what the *Times* referred to as "a marvellous effort for a man in his eighty-fourth year," the Premier said, in deep, low tones, which grew stronger and stronger as he neared the end:

> "It would be a misery to me if I had forgotten or omitted in these my closing years any measure possible for me to take towards upholding and promoting the cause, which I believe to be the cause, not of one party or another, of one nation or another, but of all parties and all nations inhabiting these islands; and to these nations I say, viewing them, as I do, with all their vast opportunities under a living union for power and for happiness, I do intreat you—if it were with my latest breath, I would intreat you—to let the dead bury the dead, and to cast behind you every recollection of bygone evils, and to cherish and love and sustain one another through all the vicissitudes of human affairs in the times that are to come."

Then came the other side of the question in a strong analytical speech from Mr. Balfour. This measure, he claimed, was "a bastard child of three different forms of government—federal, colonial, and imperial." It was a sop to disloyalty, a step to ever-increasing separation between the interests of England and Ireland, a menace to the future peace and unity of the Empire. The speech was a fighting effort worthy of the leader who now sat in the seat of Disraeli. Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Randolph Churchill, and Mr. Edward Blake followed—the latter in a maiden speech which won many congratulations—and the bill was then allowed to be read a first time. The policy of the Government was announced to involve the second reading on April 2nd, and at a meeting of the Liberal party representatives, on March 27th, Mr. Gladstone dwelt upon the state of affairs in the House; the opposition, or, as he termed it, obstruction, with which the bill was being received; and the necessity of vigorous measures to expedite its progress. On the succeeding day he received a large deputation of Belfast merchants, who came up to London to protest against Home Rule. In an elaborate reply—delivered sitting in his chair on account of mingled work and weariness—he handled at length the commercial condition of Ireland, and the analogy which he thought existed between its situation and that of Canada.

Later in the same day Mr. Balfour moved a vote of censure on Mr. Morley's policy in Ireland, which was defeated after having served to bring out a speech from the Premier instinct with his old persuasive power, and designated by Lord Randolph Churchill himself as being "impressive and entrancing." A few days afterwards Mr. Balfour visited Belfast, and received a reception which has become historic for the enthusiasm displayed by the vast multitudes gathered together to welcome the one man who, in modern records, has made his reputation and enhanced his political influence through governing Ireland. As the throngs moved through the streets of the great Protestant city, and countless banners waved in honour of the cause which Ulster loved, and the leader whom it admired so warmly, a certain famous verse must have occurred to many:

> "The conflict deepens. On, ye brave,
> Who rush to glory, or the grave!
> Wave, Ulster, all thy banners wave!
> And charge with all thy chivalry!"

But while Mr. Balfour was pouring hot shot upon his political foes from faraway Belfast, Mr. Gladstone was moving—April 6th—the second reading of his Home Rule Bill. The scene was not so impressive as on the former occasion, but probably the unusual calm of the Chamber—caused by the absence of a number of its members—gave the Premier's speech a more serene and beautiful note than had been the case before. "Up to 1832," said he, "through the long weary centuries, the question was between a class and a nation; now it is between a great nation and a small nation, between a strong nation and a weak nation, between a wealthy nation and a poor nation." Mr. Gladstone then laid down four great propositions, which he declared to be incontrovertible. The first was that there had been in the civilized world no incorporating union effected and maintained by force against either party that had ever prospered; and he explained that such a union involved the suppression of the legislature of the inferior State. The second proposition was that the incorporating unions which had really or partially flourished were those which had been specially favoured by incidents of history, geography, language, and race, and in regard to which, if force entered into the original combination, it had soon ceased and given way to harmony. Thirdly, he contended that no concession of Home Rule, unless made under compulsion, had failed to promote the attachment of the receiving to the giving power; while his fourth, and perhaps most important, proposition was that unions not incorporating, but upon a semi-independent basis, had been, in all cases, attended with a great degree of success.

Mr. Chamberlain followed in one of those cutting, clever, irritating speeches for which he has become so famous, and was succeeded a little later by Mr. Asquith in a performance which has been described as the crown and completion of a series of speeches which, taken together during one session, stand almost unparalleled in the record of so young a politician. "I regard," said the Home Secretary, "this bill as a necessary and normal step in constitutional development." Much, he declared, had been sacrificed by the aged statesman who had given so long a life of industry to the people. Of many sacrifices this measure was the fruit. "If it brings, as we believe it will, contentment to Ireland, honour to Great Britain, and added strength to the Empire, it will be the ample and abounding reward."

A pleasant incident of the debate was the strong, clear, successful utterance of Mr. Austen Chamberlain; his father's pride and delight; the congratulations which followed, and the warm-hearted sincerity of Mr. Gladstone's after-reference to the speech as "dear and refreshing to a father's heart." It must have reminded older members of another scene many, many years before, when Mr. Chamberlain himself was a young man hardly dreaming of Parliament, and Mr. Gladstone was speaking sympathetic words across the floor of the House to Mr. Disraeli in reference to the serious illness of his wife. On the 21st of April, Mr. Gladstone had carried the first walls of the enemy's position, and won the second reading of his Bill by a majority of forty-three. When he rose to make his final reply in the debate, the Liberals gave him a great shout of applause. He declared that England had made it her mission to carry freedom afar, to a convict colony of old, to Frenchmen in Canada, to Dutchmen at the Cape, to Englishmen everywhere—but never, never to Ireland. After some further stirring periods, the division was taken, the numbers announced, and another wild reception given to the Premier by his cheering, shouting followers.

Then followed the long fight in Committee, the duel between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain, the conflict over details and clauses and principles, the wonderful and sustained labours of the veteran leader, the mass of amendments and suggestions, the clever Opposition work by Mr. Balfour, the occasional bursts of wild enthusiasm on the part of the Irish, and, finally, the famous riot on July 27th, when all the concentrated passion of a bitter political period found expression in an actual, though brief, physical contest upon the floor of the House. Mr. Chamberlain had been speaking, and, in reference to some sudden change in connection with the bill, declared, in tones of the coolest sarcasm, that "every scheme is perfect—every one as they proceed from the fertile brain of the Prime Minister." And then, as the excitement began to rise and the Liberals to stir uneasily in their seats, he went on: "The Prime Minister calls black; they say it is good. He calls white; it is better. It is always the voice of a god. Never since the days of Herod has there been such ——." What he was going to say was never exactly known—though it is understood that some one heard the word "subserviency" following—because of the volume and strength of the yells which arose from the Irish ranks, and were concentrated in the single word "Judas."

The scene that followed is indescribable, nor is it necessary to do more than refer to the mass of struggling humanity which, for a few moments, occupied the floor of the House; the efforts of the leaders to calm the excited members; the calling in of the Speaker; the explanations and the general sentiment of shame over an occurrence which, it may be hoped, will remain unparalleled. On August 30th the measure was read for the third time, followed by another masterly speech from the Premier. He concluded in solemn, weighty tones, and with a House silent and listening with intentness to every word of his eloquent peroration:

> "We deny that a brand of incapacity has been laid by the Almighty on a particular and noted branch of our race—when every other branch of that race has displayed in the same subject-matter a capability, and has attained a success, which is an example to the world. We have faith, Sir, in rational liberty, and we have faith in its efficacy as an instrument of national education. We believe that experience widespread over a vast field which has been traversed at every point encourages us in our work; and, finally, we feel that the passing of this great measure through the House of Commons, after eighty and more days' debate, does, will, and must constitute the greatest amongst all the steps that have hitherto been achieved towards the attainment of its certain and its early triumph."

On September 1st the measure passed the House by a majority of thirty-four, and went up to the Lords. As the "Grand Old Man" returned from the division lobby, looking white and wearied, and sat down to write his daily note to the Queen, and in this case advise Her Majesty of the success which lay so near his heart, the whole Liberal party leapt to its feet, and gave him one more enthusiastic ovation. Then came the struggle in the Upper House. It was short, sharp, and decisive. On September 5th the debate began in the gorgeous chamber of the Peers, and with every possible accessory of interest and splendour. Noblemen from all parts of the United Kingdom trooped down to Westminster to record a vote against legislation which their body was almost unanimous in believing to be dangerous and disastrous.

The sight was a striking one. As the debate progressed, it became known that not more than forty out of nearly 500 Peers would support the Government bill. And the men who intended to thus express themselves in opposition to the measure were of the most varied types. Nearly all of them had during their lives served the people or the Crown in some capacity. Hundreds had at one time sat in the Commons; others had served in different Ministries, or distinguished themselves in the army or the navy; some had acted as diplomatists, or won high position in banking and business; others had attained their rank in various ways, perhaps in literature, like Lord Tennyson; in manufacturing, like Lord Masham; in science, like Lord Kelvin; or in engineering skill, like Lord Armstrong. Men were there, such as Lord Ebury—aged ninety-two—who had entered the Commons in 1822, and been a Privy Councillor when the Queen came to the throne; or the Duke of Northumberland, who had held a seat in the old unreformed Parliament of 1831. But whatever their services or records, there they were, bent upon punishing Mr. Gladstone, and defeating the labour of all these years. For that purpose they had come

> "From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth,
> Where the night has its grave, and the morning its birth."

Earl Spencer, the former Viceroy of Ireland, who had once so strongly practised coercion, and now, after a long and serious experience, preached conciliation with fervour and sincerity, moved the second reading of the bill. He was followed by the Duke of Devonshire in one of his sensible, practical orations, notable for the urging of local government in Ireland instead of Home Rule: "The difference between local government and Home Rule is like the difference between giving a son a share in the business and signing a deed giving all to him." Then came the Duke of Argyle in an inimitable speech. His stately presence, his handsome face, his beautiful voice, his splendid diction, and strong sincerity, combined, with his great age, to make the oration a remarkable, as well as an able, effort. After speeches from Lord Playfair and Lord Selborne came the central event of the debate—Lord Rosebery was on his feet.

The House was crowded, as well as the galleries, to hear the coming Liberal leader defend a great measure to which he was not supposed to be enthusiastically attached. The speech was cool, cutting, and clever; apparently more closely resembling Mr. Chamberlain's style than that of any other speaker in either House. Facing the phalanx of opposing hundreds, he told the Peers that "this is not a dissecting chamber, it is a chamber of death." The debate was merely academical, the result known beforehand: "There is no equal division of parties in this House—there is only one party, and the percentage of another." The arguments they had listened to reminded him of Mark Antony's words, "I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him." He concluded, after an interval of serious argument, with the assertion that the policy of Home Rule was a leap towards the light, and as such it should be accepted.

Lord Herschell then spoke, and was succeeded by Lord Salisbury, whose rising became the signal for a storm of Conservative and Unionist cheers. His speech was strong and sarcastic. He accused the Liberal speakers of having avoided the bill and its details entirely, and Lord Rosebery was told that his problem, as shown during his address of an hour, had been to speak so as not to commit himself for the future. Then came a sneering reference to "the time when the Liberal party was in the hands of statesmen, and not of deserters," and finally the peroration: "If England says that this horror is to be consummated, I agree that the situation is changed. But, as things stand, if you pass this bill, you will be untrue to the duty that has descended to you from a splendid ancestry, you will be untrue to your highest traditions, you will be untrue to the trust that has been bequeathed to you from the past, you will be untrue to the Empire of England."

The leader of England's peerage, as well as of the Tory party, had thus thrown down the gauntlet; and the response came in a division that is unparalleled in English history: For the Home Rule Bill 41, against it 419, majority 378. In the majority were nearly all the Peers whom Mr. Gladstone had himself created, or recommended for creation, during his three previous Ministries—men who were more or less distinguished by long service to the Liberal party, and who, in many cases, had served in his own administrations, or with him in those of other leaders. And the measure was now dead, leaving the Premier to face a situation in which he might well feel the keenest disappointment, mingled with considerable satisfaction. His scheme, it is true, was rejected, and his long fight, for the moment, had been rendered fruitless. But he had carried his proposals through the House of Commons after an historic contest, and he had, in that sense, won the battle of seven years.

The conflict had indeed been a bitter one. During April a man had been arrested in London who was so stirred up by the controversy that he proposed to murder the Premier. In his Ulster campaign Mr. Balfour had used the strongest language regarding the Protestant question, as had Lord Salisbury in a similar visit a few weeks afterwards. The Bishop of Derry had made himself more than notorious by declaring at a meeting in London that, "in bidding farewell to this imbecile caricature of a constitution for Ireland, I ask you to carry away with you this brief summary: Morally, it is the great betrayal; logically, it is the great fallacy; religiously, it is the great sectarianism; socially, it is the great break-up; and, imperially, it is the great break-down."

But Mr. Gladstone was neither disturbed nor discouraged. During July, when the measure was going through the House, and the result in the Lords was already expected, he wrote the President of the Midlothian Liberal Association that: "I will not anticipate a victory of prepossession over foresight; but whatever be the estimate of the bill in that assembly, its passage through a House of Commons elected less than a year ago for the very purpose of trying the issue is a cardinal fact which immensely advances the measure, and, coming after seven years' closely sustained conflict, is decisive of its ultimate success." Shortly after the Bill had been thrown out by the Upper House, the Premier went down to Edinburgh, and was enthusiastically received. Speaking on September 27th, he denounced the Lords with considerable indignation: "They have raised a greater question than they are probably aware of. I am not so entirely sure that they knew that there might be before them another question—namely, that of their own independent and irresponsible existence." He admitted the abstract right of the Upper House to throw out this or any other bill—outside of financial measures—and declared, very truly, that, "if there is on one side a determined nation, that nation will not be baffled by a phalanx of five hundred Peers."

He would not, however, urge any definite action against that body, other than a persistent continuance of the agitation for Home Rule. Eventually he believed it would prevail. But the tenor of the speech was aggressive, though non-committal in terms, and it was used by the Radicals in a strong effort to make a new issue—the Lords versus the people. Unfortunately for the attempt, the former had the best of the argument, because of the simple and undeniable fact that they represented, in this particular case, the sentiment of a majority of the English people. Meantime, Mr. Gladstone received many evidences of personal affection and regard. In the middle of August, a eulogistic address was presented to him, signed by 3,500 Irish Presbyterians. Immediately after the passage of the the Bill through the Commons came a long telegram of congratulation from the Irish National Federation of America, while messages from many other similar bodies were received. At a great meeting in New York, Mr. Bourke Cockran —a most eloquent Irishman—said, with characteristic intensity of language:

> "Let us turn our backs upon the unhappy past as we turn our faces to the smiling future. Irishmen, and the sons of Irishmen, will ever cherish in their bosoms the memory of the illustrious statesman who stands to-day before the eyes of the world crowned with imperishable glory; under whose heel we see the extinguished torch, the broken fetters of coercion; in whose hand we see the charter of liberty; on whose head descend the blessings of two nations. His enduring memory will lie in the hearts of the people who have learned to forget that England was the home of Cromwell because England is the home of Gladstone."

Well would it have been for the cause he championed had the Irish admirers of Mr. Gladstone always been as moderate and as conciliatory as they were while this measure was pending. On December 3rd preceding the presentation of his Bill to Parliament, the Premier had visited the city of his birth, the home of his childhood—Liverpool. His address to a great audience gathered for the purpose of seeing him receive the freedom of the city—that traditional English honour, which has no counterpart on the American continent—was full of interesting reminiscence and local history.

During this period Mr. Gladstone's eyesight began for the first time to trouble him. A cataract had commenced to form, and, to complicate matters, his hearing became worse and worse. Yet he had clung to his work with an energy which may be termed unique. Besides the Home Rule battle, much legislation had been attempted or consummated during the session. A labour department had been created, factory inspectors—including some women—appointed, administrative changes made in the Education Act and Poor Law regulations. An Opium Commission, and one to inquire into the agricultural depression, were appointed, and the Parish Councils Bill was carried. The Established Churches in Wales and Scotland were threatened, and Sir William Harcourt endeavoured to carry some temperance legislation. But everything had been subservient to the Irish policy of the Premier, and, so far as could be judged, its defeat in the Lords, and his own physical troubles and age, had not broken his will or his enthusiasm. Writing on September 2nd to Mr. Edward Blake, who was about to deliver an address during the Irish day celebration at the Chicago World's Fair, he observed:

> "You are in a condition to point out two things:
>
> "I. The distance which has been actually travelled over between the physical misery and political depression which marked the early years of the century and the victory recorded last night (in the House of Commons) is immeasurable.
>
> "II. The distance between that victory and the final investment of Ireland with full self-governing control over her domestic affairs is not only measurable, but short. Yet the last struggle still remains, and, like the former struggles, it will be great, and it will demand the friendly efforts of all those, wherever placed, who, under God, have lifted this great cause out of the abyss, and put it on an eminence from which there remains but a step into the promised land."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE QUEEN—MR. GLADSTONE AND THE MONARCHY.

THE position of Queen Victoria in English history, and in constitutional development generally, is of a nature absolutely unique. Her personal qualities and character, her wise views and womanly conduct, her domestic life of mingled joy and sorrow, have endeared her to the nation and the Empire in a way which alone would have proved a potent influence in the peaceful evolution of calm and settled government. And in addition to these purely personal matters and their influence, is the fact that Her Majesty's reign inaugurated and has continued a period the most important in the annals of English progress towards popular liberty, and the development of a complete and more or less harmonious system of Parliamentary freedom.

During this prolonged period of legislative change, and while the practical creation of a new form of constitutional monarchy was proceeding, the Queen has been at the heart of the varied movements of the time, with her hand upon the valve of public opinion and of Parliamentary struggle, and in close and constant intercourse with the leaders of parties and the changing principles of each succeeding year. She has seen and shared in the excitements and legislation of the Chartist period and the memorable free-trade agitation; in the Crimean war, and its varied causes and effects; in the terrors of the Indian mutiny period, and the ensuing and resultant legislation; in the Reform Bill controversies and the American war difficulties; in the varied Irish policies—Church and Land and Home Rule; in Disraeli's Imperial schemes, and, perhaps, in his aspirations; in the turmoil of the Russo-Turkish troubles, and the many small wars of the last two decades; in the development of the great Colonial

Empire, and in such scenes of vivid splendour as the opening of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition, or of the Imperial Institute; in the marvellous social, moral, material, and intellectual progress of what is justly termed the Victorian Age.

Such a prolonged experience has naturally given the Queen a wide knowledge and an acquaintance with the affairs of the nation to which even a veteran statesman like Mr. Gladstone can hardly lay claim. While his career of struggle and legislation has been slightly longer than Her Majesty's reign, yet by the very nature of party conflict he has been placed upon only one side of the national shield, and has seen affairs through the spectacles of political and party judgment. The Queen, upon the other hand, has had the fullest and freest communication with the statesmen of every shade of opinion and performance, and we know from the correspondence of this period how intimate that intercourse has often been, and how greatly her views have been respected and acted upon. From Wellington to Rosebery, from O'Connell to Parnell, from Peel to Balfour, from Russell to Harcourt; from the days of Lord Durham in Canada; from the time when Australia was an unexplored wilderness, South Africa the scene of a struggling settlement, and India under the exploitation of a great commercial company; Her Majesty has watched and helped to control, in a degree far from being generally understood, the destinies of the British Empire.

But, aside from her personal prestige, the varied extent of her experience in statecraft, and her influence in diplomatic correspondence with European rulers—so clearly exhibited in Sir Theodore Martin's "Life of the Prince Consort"—Mr. Gladstone appreciated, and more than respected, the system of constitutional monarchy of which she is the head. In his celebrated article entitled "Kin Beyond Sea," written in September, 1878, he most fully elaborated his views concerning "the great political discovery of Constitutional kingship." It was to his mind infinitely superior to any republican institution. Through the plan and practice of Ministerial responsibility to Parliament, "it aims at associating in the work of government with the head of the State the persons best adapted to meet the wants and wishes of the people, under the conditions that the several aspects of supreme power shall be severally allocated; dignity and visible authority shall lie wholly with the wearer of the crown, but labour mainly, and responsibility wholly, with its servants."

In another direction the Monarchy has been of world-wide value: "It completely serves the purpose of the many strong and rising Colonies of Great Britain, and saves them all the perplexities and perils attendant upon successions to the headship of the executive. It presents to them, as it does to us, the symbol of unity, and the object of all our political veneration, which we love to find rather in a person than in an abstract entity, like the State." Nor is the position of the monarch a merely nominal one. Non-responsibility, it is true, removes much of his or her former and practical power, but the Royal prerogative is still so wide, so complex, and so varied; the opportunities for personal influence so vast; the respect of the people and of Parliament so great; that any ruler of high character, of considerable ability, or of prolonged experience, has a weight in the government of the State and an authority between conflicting parties and Houses which the history of the Queen's reign clearly illustrates, and which statesmen of to-day, as well as of yesterday, fully appreciate.

Mr. Gladstone dealt with this phase of the subject in his remarks upon the relations between the Sovereign and his Ministers. He, or she, is entitled to knowledge and opportunity on all subjects coming before the Ministry, save where the necessities of business may serve as a limitation. In the discussion of these subjects, the Monarch has more than one advantage over his advisers. "He is permanent, they are fugitive; he speaks from the vantage-ground of a station unapproachably higher; he takes a calm and leisurely survey, while they are wearied with the preparatory stages, and their force is often impaired by the pressure of countless detail. He may be, therefore, a weighty factor in all deliberations of State." And this opinion, it must be remembered by those who are in the habit of scoffing at the modern functions and practical power of constitutional royalty, is the careful utterance of a statesman who had already filled a Premiership of unexampled activity, and lived a long life of continuous political performance. Mr. Gladstone then summarized the position of the Queen—and her successors:

> "The Sovereign of England is the symbol of the nation's unity, and the apex of the social structure; the maker (with advice) of the laws; the supreme governor of the Church; the fountain of justice; the sole source of honour; the person to whom all military, all naval, all civil service is rendered. The Sovereign owns very large properties; receives and holds, in law, the entire revenues of the State; appoints and dismisses Ministers; makes treaties; pardons crime, or abates its punishment; wages war or concludes peace; summons or dissolves the Parliament; exercises these vast powers for the most part without any specified restraint of law; and yet enjoys in regard to these, and every other function, an absolute immunity from consequences. There is no provision in the law of the United Kingdom for calling the Sovereign to account, and only in one solitary and improbable, but perfectly defined case—that of his submitting to the jurisdiction of the Pope—is he deprived by Statute of the Throne."

The writer, who, in this case, combined the author with the statesman in the treatment of a subject in which the qualifications of both are required, goes on to speak of the power which the Sovereign holds within this ring-fence of responsible Ministers. The prerogatives of the Crown he declares to be large, its functions endless, and essential to the daily action, and even the life, of the State. The august personage who, from time to time, may rest within this fence, and who may possess the art of turning to the best account the innumerable resources of the position, is no dumb and senseless idol; but, together with "real and very large means of influence upon policy, enjoys the undivided reverence which a great people feels for its head; and is likewise the first, and by far the mightiest, among the forces which greatly mould, by example and legitimate authority, the manners, nay, the morals, of a powerful aristocracy, and a wealthy and highly-trained society." Mr. Gladstone concluded this elaborate study of an important subject with a reference to the wisdom of the British Constitution in lodging the personality of its chief at such an altitude that no one can vie, or dream of vying, with it; and by the further statement that this "elevation of the official dignity in the monarch of these realms has now for a testing period worked well in conjunction with the limitation of purely personal power."

Upon several occasions, in which the Liberal leader was personally interested, the Queen has taken a share in the settlement of important questions; and, in diplomatic matters, she has insisted, and insisted successfully, upon being consulted, and her views considered. In the Irish Church disestablishment controversy, there is little doubt that her intervention greatly helped the solution of the difficulties between the Lords and the Commons, and it is understood that during the prolonged crisis which arose after the rejection of Mr. Gladstone's Franchise Bill by the Upper House in 1884 Her Majesty had something to do with the eventual compromise. How many other disputes of the kind she has helped to smooth over, and how greatly her experience and tact have kept the wheels of State running quietly at critical times, we can only guess from Mr. Gladstone's quoted remarks, and from hints in the correspondence of many public men.

We know of the difficulty between the Queen and Lord Palmerston, when the latter, able and sagacious, but hasty and passionate, statesman was Foreign Secretary in 1850-51. He was disinclined to submit his despatches upon important foreign matters before sending them off, and, in spite of remonstrances, fell into the habit of submitting them afterwards—when too late for amendment. In one case a reference was made which Her Majesty insisted upon being withdrawn, and the whole despatch, much to Palmerston's mortification, had to be recalled and altered. Finally, the Queen considered some definite action necessary, and on August 10th, 1850, wrote from Osborne a memorandum in the following terms, and in order, as she first stated, to prevent any mistake in the future:

"The Queen requires from the Foreign Secretary:

"I. That he will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know as distinctly to what she has given her Royal sanction.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN AND EMPRESS.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
ALBERT EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES.

"II. Having once given her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the Minister. Such an act she must consider as failure in sincerity towards the Crown, and justly to be visited by the exercise of her Constitutional right of dismissing that Minister. She expects to be kept informed of what passes between him and the Foreign Ministers, before important decisions are taken, based upon that intercourse; to receive the Foreign despatches in good time, and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with their contents before they must be sent off. The Queen thinks it best that Lord John Russell should show this letter to Lord Palmerston."

For a time after this decisive action matters ran with more or less smoothness until, in 1851, Lord Palmerston recklessly infringed the instructions, and at a critical moment wrote a despatch which practically recognized Louis Napoleon and his Coup d' Etat before the British Government had decided upon the course to take. Perhaps his prompt dismissal from office which followed, and at a moment when he happened to be exceptionally popular in the country, indicates the real influence of the Queen as reams of studied argument would fail to do. Though Mr. Gladstone was not at the time a member of the Russell Government, it is interesting to note that he thought Her Majesty's action thoroughly right and justifiable. Mr. George Jacob Holyoke, the well-known Radical, in his Reminiscences, states that he personally asked an expression of opinion upon the subject in 1879, and that Mr. Gladstone, in reply, "explained to me that the Crown did, in the case of Lord Palmerston's conduct, what the people would have done. The Queen deserved very high credit for her action in dismissing him."

It is now an historical fact that in 1861, and upon advice of the Prince Consort, the Queen strongly suggested an alteration in a despatch written during the most critical period of the Mason and Slidell dispute with the United States, and that this modification averted the war which then seemed inevitable. Mr. Gladstone was, at the time, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and has since frequently voiced his admiration of the wisdom shown by Prince Albert upon so many occasions. And he must have appreciated this particular instance. It induced Lord Palmerston to afterwards write the Queen: "There can be no doubt that, as your Majesty observes, the alterations made in the despatch to Lord Lyons contributed essentially to the satisfactory settlement of the dispute. But these alterations were only one of innumerable instances of the tact and judgment, and the power of nice discrimination, which excited Lord Palmerston's constant and unbounded admiration."

Lord Malmesbury, who, as Foreign Secretary in several Conservative Ministries, was much behind the scenes, tells us that it was Her Majesty's strong aversion to war which, during a certain stage in the Schleswig-Holstein complications, prevented England from being dragged into the contest between

Denmark and Prussia. And that the Queen still feels an interest in external relations as great as when she was writing lengthy letters to the Emperor Napoleon, or the King of Prussia, or the Emperor of Russia, at the time of the Crimean war, is evidenced by a sympathetic note sent to Miss Gordon—17th February, 1885—upon hearing of her brother's sad death at Khartoum:

> "How shall I write you, or how shall I attempt to express what I feel! To think of your dear, noble, heroic brother, who served his country and his Queen so truly, so heroically, with a self-sacrifice so edifying to the world, not having been rescued. That the promises of support were not fulfilled—*which I so frequently and constantly pressed on those who asked him to go*—is to me grief inexpressible."

There is an old and oft-repeated story that Her Majesty disliked Mr. Gladstone personally. It is an assertion which, of course, cannot be absolutely denied, but at the same time there does not seem to be any substantial foundation for it. She may have, and the world knows that she did, disapprove of his policy at times, but so she did with regard to Lord Palmerston, and upon, at least, one occasion in the career of Sir Robert Peel. It is probable that Lord Beaconsfield's courtly manner, inimitable wit, and social gifts, pleased and attracted a monarch who was also a woman, and for that reason, as well as because of his wide Imperial sympathies, she may have preferred the Tory leader to the absorbed, earnest, and enthusiastic Liberal. But this feeling was certainly not shown in public action, and forms no real basis for the belief that Mr. Gladstone was ever an object of genuine dislike. His own language, as already quoted, and as found in a hundred speeches, would appear to indicate his sincere personal admiration for the Queen, and such a sentiment could hardly exist unless it were to some extent reciprocated.

During the Jubilee demonstrations of 1887, Mr. Gladstone made a number of sympathetic and loyal utterances. On August 30th of that year, before a local audience and some two hundred visitors, he delivered an address at Hawarden which reviewed the Queen's reign, and expressed very fully his opinion of its beneficence and his regard for Her Majesty's qualities and policy. Towards the end of the speech, he said:

> "Under her no form of evil has been permitted within the august precincts of Windsor Castle, or of her other palaces, to present its, possibly to some, seductive, but yet loaths me and abominable features; and the people have been able to say that, in their various lines, and walks, and works of duty, those who have a humble lot and a contracted sphere have been able to borrow encouragement and instruction from the example of her whom it has pleased God to place at the head of society. . . . I beseech you, if you owe the debt of gratitude to the Queen for that which I have described, for her hearty concurrence in the work of public progress, for the admirable public example which her life has uniformly set, for her thorough comprehension of the true conditions of the great covenant between the Throne and the people—if you owe her a debt of gratitude for these things, may I say to you, try to acknowledge that debt by remembering her in your prayers."

And it must not be forgotten, as Mr. Gladstone mentioned in this speech, that the Sovereign's relations with her Premier are very close, and that he is, therefore, well qualified to give an opinion. He is frequently, and upon all important occasions, summoned to Windsor. He is in daily communication with the Queen by telegraph, and the proceedings of the Cabinet, as well as the particulars of foreign policy, are instantly advised to her. Daily, during the sitting of Parliament, the leader of the House of Commons writes Her Majesty a confidential summary of what has transpired; tells her of victory won or defeat suffered, and records the progress of legislation or debate. There are at Windsor Castle, in handsomely bound volumes, the manuscript letters written during all these stormy and varied years to Queen Victoria by the great political leaders who have come upon the surface of events and then passed away. Elsewhere, stowed away in some secret vault of the Royal castle, are the letters written by Pitt and Fox and Liverpool to George III.; by Canning to George IV.; and by Grey and Melbourne to William IV. What a mine of private history and wealth of public interest there must be in those silent memorials of the past!

Some day, perhaps, they will be made available. Sir Theodore Martin was allowed to use a few written by Mr. Disraeli when he first led the House, and their witty, sparkling tone gives some indication of that statesman's personal power of pleasing. Mr. Gladstone, during his many years of leadership, used to write his daily letter on his knee, with the assistance of a blotting pad. And on more than one critical occasion, when the fate of his Government was hanging in the balance, the epistle would be commenced with the usual formula: "Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to the Queen," and would end, perhaps, amid the cheers and counter cheers announcing his own defeat, and ringing the death-knell of some cherished measure.

An interesting incident occurred in 1865, when Mr. Gladstone had just assumed the leadership of the Commons in succession to Lord Palmerston. It was of international interest also, and illustrated the value of the influence which the Queen has so often wielded in those semi-personal matters which are yet of considerable national import. Mr. George Peabody, the eminent American millionaire and philanthropist, had spent over two millions of dollars in founding and endowing the Peabody Institute in Islington, for the benefit of the London poor. Public honours and compliments were alike refused by the donor, but on the 28th of March, hearing that he was about to sail for America, Her Majesty addressed him a personal letter of sincere appreciation. It was dated from Windsor Castle, and read as follows:

> "The Queen hears that Mr. Peabody intends shortly to return to America; and she would be sorry that he should leave England without being assured by herself how deeply she appreciates the noble act of more than princely munificence by which he has

sought to relieve the wants of her poorer subjects residing in London. It is an act, as the Queen believes, wholly without parallel; and which will carry its best reward in the consciousness of having contributed so largely to the assistance of those who can so little help themselves.

"The Queen would not, however, have been satisfied without giving Mr. Peabody some public mark of her sense of his munificience; and she would gladly have conferred upon him either a baronetcy or the Grand Cross of the Bath, but that she understands Mr. Peabody to find himself debarred from accepting such distinctions.

"It only remains, therefore, for the Queen to give Mr. Peabody this assurance of her personal feelings, which she would further wish to mark by asking him to accept a miniature portrait of herself, which she will desire to have painted for him, and which, when finished, can either be sent to him in America, or given to him on the return which, she rejoices to hear, he meditates to the country that owes him so much."

Needless to say, this letter was greatly cherished, as well as the Royal portrait which eventually came to him massively framed in gold. The incident illustrates the force of Mr. Gladstone's frequent references in his constitutional writings to the personal influence which the Sovereign may possess. As the fountain of honour, she indeed holds a powerful prerogative, and, even though it be largely wielded by the Premier for the time being, it is none the less her own. And upon certain specific occasions Her Majesty has used it, notably in proffering peerages to several of her Prime Ministers. But although Mr. Gladstone could appreciate such expressions of international sympathy as this episode produced, and could greatly admire Americans and American institutions, he seems to have remained as strongly opposed to Republicanism in constitution or practice as was the young Tory who lived under the influence of Canning, or the leadership of Wellington. During the two or three years following 1870, when the idea had a brief and sickly revival in England—as one result of the momentary dominance of the Manchester school—Mr. Gladstone struck the blow which finally crushed it. In the first-named year, the triumph of Republicanism in France led some of the theorists who belonged to the class of cosmopolitan Englishmen to form a Republican Club at Cambridge, with Mr. Henry Fawcett and Professor Clifford as officers, and with rules which defined its policy as "hostility to the hereditary principle as exemplified in monarchical and aristocratic institutions, and to all social and political privileges dependent upon difference of sex."

A little after the formation of this club—which never exerted any particular influence—Mr. Fawcett acted up to his principles by being one of the three members of the House who opposed the grant to the Princess Louise upon her wedding. And, about the same time, Sir Charles Dilke undertook the task of converting the country to their views, speaking at a number of places, and attacking the Queen and the Prince of Wales with some freedom. All that is necessary to say here is that his reception was of so unsavoury a nature as to induce him to abandon the effort, and to attempt a transference of the question to the floors of Parliament, where he hoped to be, at least, safe from personal violence. On the 19th of March, 1872, he, therefore, moved for certain returns in connection with the Civil List, with the evident hope of obtaining something to prove his unsupported charges against the Sovereign and the Monarchy.

Mr. Gladstone, in refusing, on behalf of the Government, to grant the particulars asked for, dwelt warmly upon the advantages gained by the country in its financial arrangement with the Queen upon her accession to the throne—when the Royal property had been given up in return for the permanent Civil List grant—and the honourable, conscientious manner in which Her Majesty had carried out her part of the compact. He went on to assert that Sir Charles Dilke, in a recent speech at Newcastle, had cast aside the dictates not only of loyalty and respect, but of the commonest prudence. And he declared that the member for Chelsea had apparently endeavoured "to represent the Crown as needlessly and wastefully consuming the earnings of the people; and has thought it necessary to liberate his conscience by delivering his opinions in favour of a change—an essential change—in the form of the government of this country, and thereby, I think, with most unhappy imprudence, pointing to a change most repugnant to the minds and views of a great majority of his countrymen."

The speaker added that "the whole notions entertained (in some quarters) about the enormous accumulations by the Crown—whether from the Civil List or from any other source—are utterly visionary and groundless." The disorder which followed when Mr. Auberon Herbert attempted to speak from the Republican standpoint was conclusive of the intense hostility felt by the House to the idea, though it might not be very conclusive evidence of its courtesy to the individual. But, outside of Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Herbert, no support could be obtained for the motion after Mr. Gladstone's remarks; even Mr. Fawcett declining to aid any practical effort in the direction of Republicanism.

Mr. Gladstone appears also to have been upon such terms with the various members of the Royal family as befitted a national leader. One of the most interesting of all his published letters was the following, which he addressed to Prince Albert Victor, eldest son of the Prince of Wales, upon the attainment of his majority:

Hawarden Castle, January 7th, 1885.

SIR,—

As the oldest among the confidential servants of Her Majesty, I cannot allow the anniversary to pass without a notice which will, to-morrow, bring your Royal Highness to full age, and thus mark an important epoch in your life. The hopes and intentions of those whose lives, like mine, lie in the past are of little moment; but they have seen much, and what they have seen suggests much for the future.

There lies before your Royal Highness, in prospect, the occupation, I trust at a distant date, of a throne which, to me, at least, appears the most illustrious in the world, from its history and associations, from its legal basis, from the weight of the cares it brings, from the loyal love of the people, and from the unparalleled opportunities it gives, in so many ways and so many regions, of doing good to the almost countless numbers whom the Almighty has placed beneath the sceptre of England.

I fervently desire and pray, and there cannot be a more animating prayer, that your Royal Highness may ever grow in the principles of conduct, and may be adorned with all the qualities which correspond with this great and noble vocation.

And, Sir, if sovereignty has been, by our modern institutions, relieved of some of its burdens, it still, I believe, remains true that there has been no period of the world's history at which successors to the monarchy could more efficaciously contribute to the stability of a great historic system, dependent even more upon love than upon strength, by devotion to their duties, and by a bright example to the country. This result we have happily been permitted to see, and other generations will, I trust, witness it anew.

Heartily desiring that in the life of your Royal Highness every private and every personal desire may be joined with every public blessing, I have the honour to remain, Sir,

Your Royal Highness's most dutiful and faithful servant,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

In this eloquent and evidently sincere letter lies one of the best and truest conceptions of the British Monarchy and the Sovereign's duties, which has ever been penned. It is sad to think that the amiable young Prince to whom it was addressed, after having commenced to perform the functions of his high position; receiving the title of Duke of Clarence and Avondale; and winning a bride in the person of the Princess Mary of Teck; should have been cut off early in 1892 upon the very verge of his marriage. When the event occurred, Mr. Gladstone was out of the country, but he promptly wrote to Sir William Harcourt, asking him to offer suitable expressions of regret in the House, and adding, for himself, that "the incidents of public life had given me some opportunities of estimating the high qualities of the Duke of Clarence. He had exhibited many characteristics which made his life one of great value and promise to the Empire at large."

This deep loyalty of the Liberal leader to monarchical principles has more than once annoyed many of his followers, and antagonized the Radicals. Such was notably the case during the debate upon the Royal Grants in 1889, when Lord Salisbury's Government had taken the question in hand with the view to a final settlement for the current reign, and in preference to making Parliamentary provision from time to time, as might be required. A Committee of the House of Commons was appointed, of which Mr. Gladstone was a member, and, after it had been informed, under a pledge of secrecy, as to the total value of Her Majesty's investments, it came to the conclusion that provision should be made for the children of the Prince of Wales. Mr. Labouchere, who was a member of this Committee, in afterwards writing upon "English Royalty," in the *Forum*, of New York, declared that he could not, of course, break this pledge, but added: "I do not think I am breaking confidence in saying that the amount (of the savings) was surprisingly small."

Mr. Gladstone, who, at the moment, was celebrating his golden wedding at Hawarden, came down especially to support the grants, and, much to the disgust of some of the Radicals, made one of the most effective of his many speeches. After a reference to what some people thought the large incomes of the Royal family, he proceeded to explain the difference between ordinary private wealth and wealth which is associated with, and even tied down to, the discharge of public duties and responsibilities. "I am averse," he added, "to all economy which would prevent not only the dignity, but which would impair the splendour of the Court. In a society constituted as this society is, the Court ought to be a splendid Court."

He declared that the heir apparent had "fulfilled the expectations which Parliament was entitled to form with respect to his income and expenditure"; and that "it will be admitted that circumstances have tended somewhat to throw upon the Prince of Wales an amount of public duty in connection with institutions, as well as with ceremonials, which was larger than could reasonably be expected, and with regard to which every call has been honourably and devotedly met." In answer to a Radical member who had proclaimed himself a servant of the people alone, Mr. Gladstone asserted him to be "a servant of the Crown, as well as the people," and concluded in the following words:

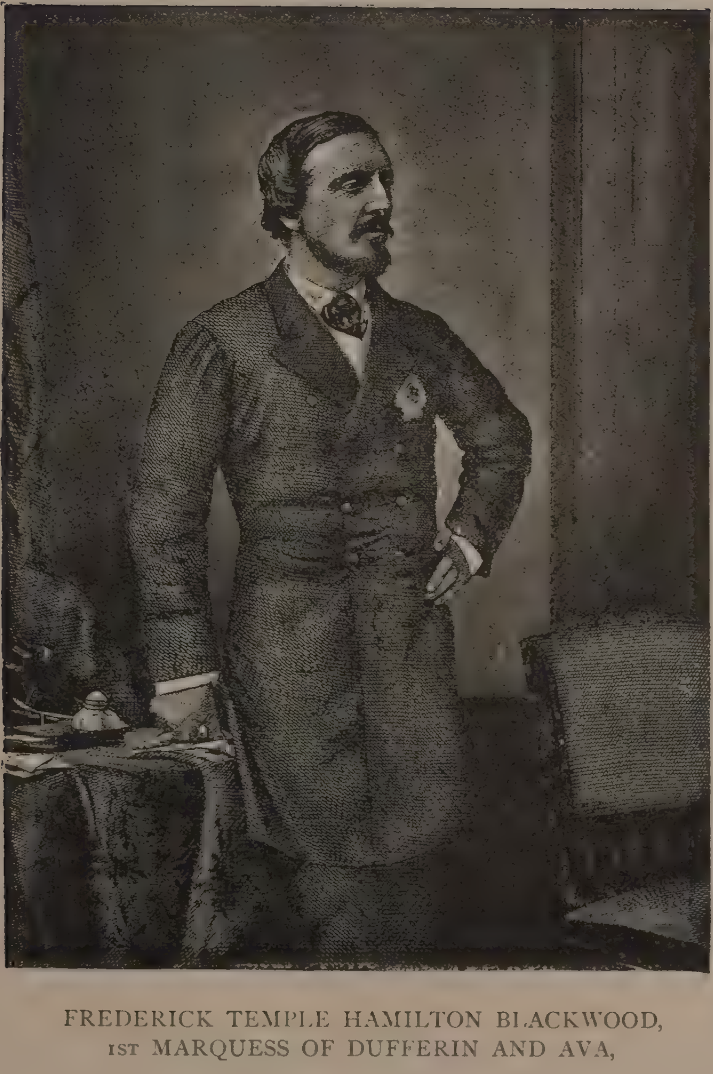
> "Having, as I hope, done my duty to the people, I have endeavoured, as far as I could, to contribute towards casting this delicate question into a form which, within a very short time, is likely to become perfectly satisfactory; and having done that, I am not ashamed to say that, in my old age, I rejoice in any opportunity which enables me to testify that, whatever may be thought of my opinions or my proposals in general politics, I do not forget the services which I have borne for so many years to the illustrious representative of the British Monarchy."

Upon the general question of loyalty to the Throne, it is, therefore, abundantly evident that Mr. Gladstone retained in his last days the sentiments which actuated his youthful appeals to the electors of the ducal borough of Newark. The constant Conservative cheering which accompanied the sentences of his speech on the Royal Grants was not unlike an ovation given him as the "Defender of our Constitution" upon a certain occasion half a century before, and it properly marked one point, at least, in which his earliest and latest convictions completely harmonized. He did not, it is true, agree with the policy which endeavoured to enhance the dignity of Her Majesty's position by the title of Empress of India, but his objection was based mainly upon the ground that the associations surrounding the Imperial title would derogate from the ancient dignity of the Crown of England rather than add to it, and no doubt the fact of the proposal having formed part of a vast, and, to his mind, vague, general policy, increased very greatly his opposition to the idea.

But no English statesman has apparently excelled him in appreciation of the Queen's personal qualities and national influence. He has always been more than ready to echo those beautiful lines of Tennyson:

> "Her Court was pure, her life serene;
> God gave her peace, her land reposed,
> A thousand claims to reverence closed
> In her as mother, wife, and Queen."

And the greatness of that reign has been witnessed by him from its commencement to its closing years. He has shared in its legislation, participated in its councils, contributed to its marvellous changes, and helped in its popular progress. No one understands more fully than he that the glories of the Victorian era, as the late Earl of Carlisle once happily observed, are "the glories of peace, of industry, of commerce, and of genius; of justice made more accessible, of education made more universal; of virtue more honoured; of religion more beloved; of holding forth the earliest gospel light to the unawakened nations; the glories that arise from gratitude for benefits conferred; and the blessings of a loyal and chivalrous, because a contented, people."



FREDERICK TEMPLE HAMILTON BLACKWOOD,
1ST MARQUESS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA,

Governor-General of Canada, 1872-78.

HENRY CHARLES KEITH FITZMAURICE, 5TH MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE

Governor-General of Canada, 1883-88.

CHAPTER XXX.

MR. GLADSTONE AND COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT.

WHEN the history of the British Empire in the present century comes to be written with clearness and authority, it will be found, so far as relations with the external dependencies are concerned, to owe its present unity and future cohesion to good-luck, rather than to definite statecraft. In isolated cases, men have risen in the Colonies, and governed in England, who were able to see ahead, and to guide their policy in accordance with the Imperial power and greatness which was destined to mark the close of that hundred years of marvellous development which followed upon the destruction of the first English Empire in America.

But, as a rule, matters were allowed to drift, and during the first half of the century constitutional self-government was given by the English Liberal party to Canada, to the majority of the Australian Colonies, and, in a modified form, to Cape Colony, without any definite declaration of policy for the future, and with a general impression, which increased as the years rolled on, that independence was the ultimate object, and would be the most beneficial result, of Colonial freedom in government and legislation. Mr. J. A. Froude, the eminent historian, goes so far as to say in a letter to the *Times*, April 25th, 1893, that "Constitutions were granted to Canada and the other great Colonies with *a distinct view* towards their separation from the Mother Country." While, therefore, the Liberals did a great service to the Colonies in aiding the development of their earlier constitutional systems, they also, or a part of them, committed the grievous error of promoting ideas which could only end—unless otherwise checked—in disintegration and disaster. But they were not alone in this mistake. The Conservative party seems to have been, up to 1870, almost equally indifferent. Sir Robert Peel voiced a school of commercial legislation which came to look upon all sentiment as dangerous, and his views soon permeated both parties, and controlled, to a great extent, the expression of their opinions upon Imperial questions.

Meantime, however, the Empire grew and flourished. In the East it expanded with giant strides, until India became the greatest dependency ever held by any nation. In the West a congeries of scattered colonies became a strong and united Dominion. In Australia countries seemed to grow up in a night and develop in a day; while South Africa, through much war and trouble, laid broad and deep the foundations of what will yet be another Hindostan in extent and population. As a poet has eloquently and truly said:

"We tracked the winds of the world to the steps of their very thrones;
The secret parts of the world were salted with our bones;
"Till now the name of names, England, the name of might,
Flames from the Austral bounds to the ends of the Northern night;
"And the call of her morning drum goes in a girdle of sound,
Like the voice of the sun in song, the great globe round and round;
"And the shadow of her flag, when it shouts to the mother breeze,
Floats from shore to shore of the universal seas."

Yet it was all done in a haphazard, unpremeditated sort of way. More than one English Ministry has annexed territory almost by accident, certainly by chance, and afterwards found it to be invaluable. Again and again great Colonies have been told by English statesmen that the sooner they went the better it would be for all concerned. In this view Mr. Gladstone never shared. He was not an Imperialist, in the modern sense of the word, nor was any one else in the practical, public life of that period, but he seems to have been always much interested in Colonial matters. His first speech dealt with the question of slavery in the Colonies, while Canada, in the years between 1830 and 1840, was the subject of many remarks by him in the House of Commons. In 1836, he was a member of the Committee appointed to enquire into the different modes in which public lands were acquired and disposed of in the Australian Colonies, the Cape of Good Hope, and the West Indies, with a view to ascertaining a method which might be made mutually satisfactory to the Mother Country and the Colonies.

He was also greatly interested in the colonization of New Zealand, and in 1838 strongly urged the House to initiate some system of control in that country—where, by the way, Sir Robert Inglis, a typical Tory of the time, declared England had no more right to settle people than she had to colonize in France. Two years later, Mr. Gladstone was member of a Select Committee to enquire into the whole subject. About the same time he took up the cause of the settlers at the Cape, and in a letter written October 16th, 1837, referred to them as having "made some use of me in Parliament." In the succeeding summer, he called the attention of the House to a petition presented by himself from the people of Albany, a frontier post at the Cape, complaining that the Home Government had promised them protection and support, but had left them to suffer much loss from a barbarous enemy. It is curious to note that one result of the neglect which Mr. Gladstone brought to the notice of the House, was the "trek" of many Dutch settlers into the far interior, and the formation of the Boer republic, which afterwards became such a source of trouble to himself, to England, and to the Cape. He was beaten a little later by a majority of nine votes in an effort to have this migration of the Dutch investigated and checked.

As time went on, Mr. Gladstone's views upon Colonial topics underwent a natural change. He fell into the swim of Sir Robert Peel's commercial policy, and shared in the removal of the preferential duties, the accomplishment of free trade, and the subsequent development of that cosmopolitan sentiment which found its milder and wiser exponents in leaders like himself, and Earl Grey, and Lord Palmerston, and its definite separatist advocates in Bright and Cobden, and, in a less influential degree, Mr. Goldwin Smith. To the coming Liberal chief, the spirit of the times meant England first, the Colonies second, the rest of the world third; while it did not appear impossible to him that the interests of England might be such upon occasion as to place her in antagonism to both the Colonies and foreign countries. The Manchester School, which developed out of the free-trade idea that a Colony was no better than a foreign country, and to which Mr. Gladstone never belonged, thought that the interests of England were permanently—not possibly—hostile to the Colonies, and that the separation of the latter from the Empire would be distinctly beneficial to both.

But the force of growth, the influence of Colonial loyalty, and the practical demands of each passing year, became too strong for these theoretical arguments, and eventually created the revulsion which has made the policy of to-day a public recognition of an absolute identity in British and Colonial interests, as against even the world in arms. Circumstances have thus made Mr. Gladstone's claim, in one of his addresses to the Midlothian electors, an historic fact:

> "As to the Colonies, Liberal Administrations set free their trade with all the world, gave them popular and responsible government, undertook to defend Canada with the whole strength of the Empire, and organized the great scheme for uniting the several settlements of British North America into one Dominion, to which, when we quitted office in 1866, it only remained for our successors to ask the ready assent of Parliament. It is by these measures that the Colonies have been bound in affection to the Empire, and the authors of them can afford to smile at baseless insinuations."

Yet it remains true that the whole under-current of British politics between 1840 and 1870 was hostile to close or closer Imperial unity, was indifferent to Colonial development or loyalty, and was not averse to the thought of eventual separation. It is greatly to Mr. Gladstone's credit that while many leaders, in both parties, were seriously affected by this stream of tendency, and even went the length of urging "emancipation," as it was called, he always adhered to the opinion that while separation might come, if earnestly desired by the Colonies, yet nothing should be done to hasten it, and everything in the way of free government and conciliatory treatment should be done in order to avert it. As to defence, English honour was bound up with the adequate protection of the Colonies. But he was never aggressive in his views upon the subject. Had he been so, English sentiment would have changed sooner, and much serious difficulty in the government of the Empire have been prevented.

A part of the trouble was due to ignorance regarding Colonial feelings and Colonial views of self-government. To most people the latter seemed impossible of accomplishment without independence, and, as Colonial freedom in legislation was clearly inevitable, separation in the future seemed also an apparent matter of course. Writing Sir Edmund Head, Governor-General of Canada, on the 6th of August, 1848, so shrewd a thinker and statesman as Sir George Cornewall Lewis declared that a recent speech by Sir William Molesworth against Downing Street rule, meant, if carried out, "the abolition of the influence of England, and the grant of independence to the Colonies." Writing on April 5th of the succeeding year, he expressed the following definite opinion:

> "I agree with you that responsible government, though it may be defective in theory, may nevertheless be worked in practice. But it cannot be worked unless people in this country see that, *pro tanto*, it is a concession of virtual independence to the Colony. . . . Altogether, our Colonial relations are in a very unsatisfactory state just at present. There is a constant series of attacks on the Colonial Office, which can end in no good result, inasmuch as they are founded on no intelligible or consistent view, and, in fact, imply that there is to be no interference from this country."

But whether the situation arose from ignorance or indifference, or, as now appears, from a mixture of the two, there could be no doubt of the growing estrangement in sentiment. The correspondence of Lord Elgin, when Governor-General of Canada, shows this very vividly. In a letter to Earl Grey, who was Colonial Secretary in the Cabinet of Lord John Russell, he said, on November 16th, 1849, that "when I protest against Canadian projects for dismembering the Empire, I am always told that the most eminent statesmen in England have over and over again told us that whenever we chose we might separate." He went on in this and other letters to urge that a different course should be taken, but without much avail. Indeed, on March 23rd, 1850, he draws indignant attention to a recent speech by the Prime Minister in the British House of Commons, and to his declaration that he "looked forward to the day when the ties which he was endeavouring to render so easy and mutually advantageous would be sundered."

And then Lord Elgin proceeded to very pertinently ask why Lord John Russell and the people of England should persist in assuming that the Colonial relation was incompatible with maturity and full development. "Is this really," he demanded, "so incontestable a truth that it is a duty not only to hold, but to proclaim it?" Others, however, were even more explicit than Lord John Russell. Mr. Bright used his great gift of eloquence to picture a future in which British America should be detached from the Empire and added to the United States: "It may be but a vision," said he, on one occasion, "but I will cherish it. I see one vast confederation stretching from the frozen north in unbroken line to the glowing south, and from the wild billows of the Atlantic westward to the calmer waters of the Pacific main; and I see one people, and one language, and one law, and one faith, and, over all that wide continent, the home of freedom, and a refuge for the oppressed of every race and of every clime."

The beauty of such a word-picture is undeniable, but it is questionable whether Mr. Bright and his followers ever understood the one central fact which stands out from the pages of all English history—that neither distance by sea, nor separation by continents, nor an environment of savages, affects the national feeling of a British subject, or changes the loyalty of a true Englishman to the flag of his fathers, the country of his birth, or the home of his ancestors. Too many leaders in those days were, however, narrow and cramped in their view of external matters; and, then, it is always easier to destroy than to build:

"A thousand years scarce serve to form a State;
An hour may lay it in the dust."

Mr. Bright, with his eloquence, might greatly contribute to dismember the Empire which required so much time and blood and treasure to create. He could do much to destroy protection, and Mr. Goldwin Smith to bury it, but neither of them could have constructed a new tariff, as did Mr. Gladstone, or negotiate an intricate commercial treaty, as did Cobden. But even the departments of the Government and the permanent staff of officials seem to have become permeated with this policy of separation. In the Autobiography of Sir Henry Taylor, we are told by that gentleman, in the most cool and utter ignorance of the real nature of his conduct, that in 1864—he was then holding a high position in the Colonial Office—it became necessary for him to send a certain paper by Sir Charles Elliot, dealing with Colonial defence, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies—the Duke of Newcastle. In transmitting it, he states that he expressed his own views to his official superior in the following language:

> "As to our American possessions, I have long held and often expressed the opinion that they are a sort of *damnosa hereditas;* and when your Grace and the Prince of Wales were employing yourselves so successfully in conciliating the Colonists, I thought you were drawing closer ties which might better be slackened if there were any chance of their slipping away altogether. I think that a policy which has regard to a not very far-off future should prepare facilities and propensities for separation; and I therefore agree entirely with Sir Charles Elliot's preference of a local and indigenous military force. So long as there shall be a single Imperial battalion in the provinces, the whole Imperial army and exchequer will be committed to its support under difficulties; and

circumstances may arise in which a large proportion of the Imperial army and treasure will not be more than enough. . . . In my estimation, the worst consequence of the late dispute with the United States has been that of involving this country and the North American provinces in closer relations and a common cause."

Perhaps nothing could better indicate the dead level of opinion upon this subject than the fact that such an impudent epistle could be written by one of the permanent Downing Street officials without in any way affecting his position or prospects. Yet Palmerston was at this time Premier, and *Civis Britannicus Sum* was in foreign affairs the motto of his Government. The same valuable servant of the Empire goes on to tell us that Sir Frederick Rogers, Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and afterwards created Lord Blachford for his services, wrote to him in 1865 in a somewhat similar strain: "I go very far with you in the desire to *shake off all responsibly-governed Colonies;* and, as to North America, I think if we abandon one, we had better abandon all. I should wholly abhor being left with a pitiful remnant on my hands—say, Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland. I also go with you in hating the talk about prestige."

The arguments used by these men and by others, such as Mr. Goldwin Smith, were sufficiently simple and narrow. Colonies, they claimed, did not pay. They were useless for commercial purposes, and too costly for purposes of power. The days of discrimination had passed away; all markets were now alike for selling British goods in; while only the cheapest were desirable for the purchase of products which the home consumer could use. Hence, probably, the tendency of both parties, and of leaders, who did not share the extreme views described, to check wherever possible the extension of the Empire, and to crush schemes of ambitious organization which might lead to future entanglements. Thus the mission of Mr. Gladstone to the Ionian Islands under Conservative auspices had resulted in their being handed over to Greece in 1859; Sir George Grey was recalled from South Africa by Lord Derby, because of his efforts to confederate the Colonies there in a union which it was feared would be preliminary to wider Imperial complications rather than to local independence. Hence, also, in some quarters, the encouragement given Canadian Confederation because of the opposite reason—it might really result in independence.

In Mr. W. L. Rees' biography of Sir George Grey is the statement that during the ten years following that official's recall from the Cape—by a Conservative Government, it may be remarked—"the dismemberment craze had spread far and wide. Some, indeed, among the leading intellects of England were awakening to the danger which threatened her greatness from this direction, but Mr. Goldwin Smith and his friends and admirers . . . had persuaded a large portion of the talking and writing public that it would be better for England to cast off the Colonies altogether." Mr. Froude, in his "Life of Lord Beaconsfield," also analyzes the situation at this time with admirable distinctness. After pointing out that the external Empire was supposed to contribute nothing to the national wealth which would not be equally available under independence, he proceeds to describe the too common feeling that Colonies were only a cause of embarrassment and weakness, and a source of possible danger and of increased responsibilities. He had known a distinguished Liberal statesman to say that the only objection to parting with the Colonies was the fact that, without them, England would become too strong and aggressive, and might even be dangerous to the rest of the world.

These and similar doctrines had been acted upon for a number of years by the authorities at the Colonial Office. "Constitutions were granted so unconditional, so completely unaccompanied with provisions for the future relations with the Mother Country, that the connection was obviously intended to have an early end." And these tendencies were encouraged, and even practical steps of serious import taken, without, as he truly says, "that consultation with the nation which ought to have preceded an action of such large consequence." And, as late as 1875, Mr. W. E. Forster, in addressing the Philosophical Institute of Edinburgh, told his audience that Sir George Campbell, a most successful Indian governor, had recently informed him that, in his opinion, "the sooner the Colonial connection was severed the better." Is it, therefore, any wonder that the reaction should have commenced about this time to show itself, or that Tennyson should have so nobly breasted the swimming tide of separation with those historic lines:

"We lately heard
A strain to shame us: Keep you to yourselves;
So loyal is too costly! Friends, your love
Is but a burthen; loose the bond and go.
Is this the tone of empire? Here the faith
That made us rulers? This, indeed, her voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hougoumont
Left mightiest of all nations under heaven?
What shock has fooled her since that she should speak
So feebly?"

The Manchester School, which was the heart and centre of this antagonism to the Colonies, boasted Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden as its leaders, and Mr. Goldwin Smith as its literary mouthpiece. The latter tells us in a recent article—March, 1895—that it rose out of the free-trade movement, and, he might have added, flourished upon the baser element which is to be found in all commercial policies—the greed of gold. Trade became to its disciples the only thing in this world worth cultivating, and, as the Colonies did not at the moment conduce to that end, they were to go. As war was disastrous to commerce and the accumulation of wealth, peace, at any price, was added to the planks of the policy. As active intervention in foreign affairs, whether on behalf of extended liberty, or for the protection of British national honour or of British subjects, was liable to distract public attention from the noble pursuit of trade, and trade alone, non-intervention became another portion of the platform.

So, for a couple of decades, the Manchester School flourished like a green bay tree. That it did not break up the Empire is due to the innate patriotism and the practical common sense of the average British citizen at home and abroad. The majority accepted the theory, but failed to practise it; so that while the air was full of talk about independence and separation, the men who were not talkers, but workers, went on about their business, and calmly, steadily, and surely built up the fabric of Imperial power. As already stated, Mr. Gladstone did not share in the extreme school of thought. But, unfortunately, he was in close political relations with its leaders, and the fact that the most active amongst them were Liberals in name induced a very common belief that he was also in sympathy with them upon these collateral issues. He was known to love peace and to hate war; he had been a great commercial Minister; and, in the early "seventies," he was instrumental in having the Imperial troops removed from Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

Hence the vigorous language used by Mr. Disraeli during a great speech at the Crystal Palace on June 24th, 1872. The utterance is important as marking the turn of the tide, and the beginning of the end which soon came to the Imperial negation idea. The speaker declared that for forty years "there has been no effort so continuous, so subtle, supported by so much energy, and carried on with so much ability and acumen, as the attempts of Liberalism to effect the disintegration of the Empire." If he had said "a section of Liberalism," he would have been absolutely correct; and, if he had added that this section was aided by the indifference of the Conservatives, he would have covered the whole ground. But, as it was, the protest did good. He concluded with an expression of belief that the disintegration movement had entirely failed:

> "But how had it failed? Through the sympathy of the Colonies with the Mother Country. They had decided that the Empire should not be destroyed, and no Minister in England would do his duty who neglected any opportunity of reconstructing as much as possible the Colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which might become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to the land."

From this time forward a new line of thought became visible, and commenced to operate, feebly and with uncertain aim at first, then with force and earnestness, throughout the policy of England. Lord Beaconsfield spent himself chiefly during his Administration in controlling foreign affairs, but he still managed, upon every possible occasion, to say a word for general Imperial unity. The idea spread quickly. After all, it was really at the heart of the average Englishman, and only needed a crisis which might show separation in all its nakedness of desertion, disintegration, naval weakness, and dishonour, in order to arouse the dormant sentiment, and make it a political power. And the removal of the troops from the Colonies, which Mr. Gladstone favoured from motives of economy, and because of the desirability of inculcating Colonial self-reliance, but which was widely represented as being a great practical step towards independence, had constituted the critical moment.

But, from 1872 onwards, a very different tone commenced and continued to develop in public discussions. Writing, in September, 1878, to the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Gladstone elaborated in one of his most brilliant articles his views upon the general question of "England's Mission." The gist of the whole argument is that he wanted to maintain the Empire, but not to extend it. This is where he had always parted company with the Cobden and Bright section. They neither wished to maintain nor to extend the external possessions of Great Britain. "The central strength of England," declared the author, "lies in England." Her first care should be her own children within her own shores, the redress of wrongs, the supply of needs, the improvement of home laws and institutions. The source of England's vigour lies, he reiterated, in the heart which has so long propelled the blood through all its regions, and in the brain which has bound and binds them into one.

Still "the sentiment of empire may be called innate in every Briton. If there are exceptions, they are like those of men born blind or lame among us." And then he continued in words sufficiently striking:

> "It is part of our patrimony, born with our birth, dying only with our death; incorporating itself in the first elements of our knowledge, and interwoven with all our habits of mental action upon public affairs. . . . Energetic efforts have been necessary to relieve the Mother Country from military charge for the Colonies in ordinary years of peace; and these have been largely, but not as yet uniformly, successful. Still, whatever be in those respects the just balance of the account, it is felt that the Colonial relation involves far higher chains of consideration; and the founding of these free, growing, and vigorous communities has been a specific part of the work providentially assigned to Britain. The day has gone by when she would dream of compelling them by force to remain in political connection with her. But, on the other hand, she would never suffer them to be torn away from her; and would no more grudge the cost of defending them against such a consummation than the father of a family grudges the expense of the food necessary to maintain his children.
>
> "'Put the whole world's strength
> Into one grand arm, it shall not force
> This lineal honour from us.'"

At the same time, however, he denounced aggressive Imperialism, and the idea that the Colonies could ever be induced to take any large part in the defence of the Empire, or could beneficially share in its administration. Mutual affection, and social and moral sympathies, were the chief factors upon which he relied for continued unity. But though the possibility of closer relations was only just dawning upon the political horizon, it was a great beginning, and an essential basis, to have a leading Liberal statesman thus denounce separation, and declare his willingness to defend the Empire against all comers. The rest was only a matter of time. In his Midlothian speeches of 1879 and 1884, Mr. Gladstone made many references to the Colonies. In one, he spoke of the bonds of liberty and love by which the Liberal party had united the Empire, and added that "the whole Colonial community, with one heart, one mind, one soul, has proclaimed, in terms that cannot be mistaken, its undying loyalty to the Crown and to the Empire." He more than once exulted over the fact that it was a Liberal Cabinet which pledged England to defend Canada with all the resources of the Empire against any attack from the United States, and he commenced his first speech in 1880 by reminding his hearers that he was a member of the Ministry which had sanctioned the annexation of Scinde.

A year later, and after becoming Prime Minister, he marked the new situation of Liberalism in this connection by declaring that there was no more idle conception amongst all the vain imaginings that fill the atmosphere of politics, than the belief that there was in England a party of men who are "insensible to the great dignity and the great duty" surrounding the maintenance of the Colonial Empire. As Mr. Goldwin Smith has declared that his friends constituted a "school of thought," and not a party, and as its influence was already at the lowest ebb, this statement was reasonably accurate, though a few years before it could not have been made. And, continued Mr. Gladstone, "there is no man worthy of the name of a statesman who is not sensible that the business of founding and of cherishing those Colonies is one that has been so distinctly entrusted by Providence to the care of the people of this country that we should almost as soon think of renouncing the very name of Englishmen as of renouncing the great duties which, passing beyond these, are imposed upon us in regard to the more distant, but not less dear, portions of this great British Empire."

It is questionable if Lord Beaconsfield or Lord Salisbury could have spoken more strongly than this. But it took time for the minor leaders in both parties to come up to the ideals of their chiefs. The lessons of disintegration had been too long planted in the soil to fail of leaving some weeds of doubt and delusion behind. Lord Kimberley and Lord Derby, who, in turn, held the reins of the Colonial Office during Mr. Gladstone's second Government, 1880-1885, were still more or less influenced by the old principles. Those principles had made Lord Granville, when holding the same post in 1869, declare to the Governors of all the self-controlled Colonies—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape—his strong disapproval of, and even opposition to, any project for a Colonial Conference or Congress, either temporary or permanent.

Lord Derby seems to have been particularly antagonistic to Colonial extension and freedom of action. Yet his brother and successor, known in Canada as Lord Stanley of Preston, was a thorough Imperialist. One incident will suffice to illustrate his policy. Queensland, at a moment when Germany was exhibiting great colonizing zeal, annexed the neighbouring island of New Guinea, in order to prevent Germany from doing so, and in anticipation of expected Imperial approval. Lord Derby promptly disavowed and repudiated the act, and after long and useless correspondence and controversy, Germany quietly proceeded to annex the best portion of the territory. As might be expected, the Colonial Secretary was never forgiven in Australia for his short-sighted indifference, and *The Australasian*, a leading Melbourne paper, well represented this feeling in its editorial of December 27th, 1884: "No language will be too strong to express the pain, regret, humiliation, and resentment which such a step has occasioned to Her Majesty's subjects in Australasia. Nothing could have occurred so well calculated to weaken the feelings of attachment which bind them to the Mother Country."

But this was one of the last convulsive efforts of a dying school of thought. A few survivors there still are. Mr. John Morley is the chief representative at the end of the century of the philosophical Radicals of its middle years—Molesworth and Stuart Mill, Fawcett and Cornewall Lewis. He still, to a certain extent, stands by the old gospel of selfishness and narrow-minded inability to comprehend the change in the nations around him, and in the construction and sentiment of the British Empire. Mr. G. W. Smalley, writing as an American of the Americans, but after many years of residence and experience in England, somewhere asks, with considerable significance: "Why is it that men like Mr. Morley sometimes talk and write as if they cared little about the Empire?" And he goes on to note that "their tone is, I must say, not unlike the tone which was but too common in the Northern States before the rebellion. There were, in those days, men of culture who yet cared little or nothing for the Union." So far as this anti-unionism in England is concerned, he expresses a very clear conception of its origin: "It was perhaps to Cobden, and in some measure to Bright, and in greater measure to lesser men than either, that England was indebted for the birth and growth of an anti-Imperial sentiment."

Even while the trouble was progressing in New Guinea, however, a great change impended. It was in the summer of 1884 that Mr. W. E. Forster, Lord Rosebery, Mr. James Bryce, and other Liberal leaders, joined with Conservative opponents in the formation of the Imperial Federation League. Whatever may have been the practical work of this organization, there can be no doubt as to the value of its advocacy. The dormant or floating sentiment of unity was educated, guided, and crystallized into a steady force of enthusiasm, and the country, as a whole, was brought to a realization of what Disraeli had once urged, and what Mr. Gladstone had lately claimed, that there should be no parties or divisions in Great Britain upon the general question of Imperial union. As to details, there were many differences, especially in connection with trade, but the feeling has been growing so steadily stronger that even free-traders, such as Lord Rosebery and Mr. Chamberlain, or fair-traders, such as Lord Salisbury and Mr. Howard Vincent, can now stand upon the same platform, and one directly antagonistic to the Manchester School, and, in this respect, to the Liberal party itself as it was twenty years ago. The new principle of Empire could not be given more forcibly than in the following extract from Lord Salisbury's speech at Exeter, in February, 1892:

> "What is it that gives to this little island its commanding position? Why is it that fleets from every nation, from every quarter of the globe, come into your ports; that the products of countless regions are subject to your industry; and that the manufactures which the industry of your people complete are carried to the farthest corners of the globe? What is it that gives to you this privileged position? It is that your flag floats over regions far vaster than your own, and that upon the dominions of your sovereign the sun never sets."

While, however, the developments of recent years and the growth of Colonial trade have brought the benefits of closer commercial, as well as constitutional, relations to the front, and have compelled almost every one to recognize the fact in such general terms as are conveyed in the words of Lord Salisbury given above, they have also raised the question of maintaining intact the present free-import system, as against a possible trade arrangement within the Empire, and the establishment of a sort of moderate Imperial protective system. Here, as might be expected, Mr. Gladstone stood in firm opposition to any alteration or modification of the principle which he has for fifty years considered so great and beneficent.

A deputation waited upon him on April 13th, 1893, from the Federation League, and obtained his opinions in this connection—sentiments vigorously reiterated in a subsequent speech at Dundee. He declared, in preliminary words, that "the maintenance of the unity of the Empire, and the consolidation of that union, is an object dear to us all." Every suggestion for drawing the ties closer should be considered with prepossessions in its favour, and it was not impossible that an Imperial Council of Defence might be evolved, and even a system of federation established in time, by the working of many minds and the free intercommunication of ideas. But upon one point he desired to be particularly clear and explicit:

> "I do not think I should be dealing fairly with you if I held out any expectation that, so far as I myself am concerned, which is very unimportant, and, further, so far as my political friends are concerned, that we should even be prepared to propose the

consolidation of the Empire by means of reversing the principles of our commercial legislation, and introducing preferences into the terms upon which commodities imported from over sea are received in the ports of the United Kingdom."

So far as Mr. Gladstone is concerned this utterance is probably final, but commerce and trade requirements, and fiscal needs, assume such varied forms in an Empire like that of England that there is no possibility of holding the future in bonds. Change is, in reality, the very basis of the existence and unity of the British realms. When Mr. Disraeli spoke at the Crystal Palace, he inaugurated a new way of treating Imperial affairs. When Mr. Gladstone supported the acquisition of Uganda, in 1893, against the hostile views of thirty-six Liberals and a dozen other members of the House, he revolutionized the old party principle of opposition to Imperial extension. When Lord Rosebery took up Imperial Federation, he finally buried the Manchester School, which Disraeli had wounded and reaction killed. When Mr. James Bryce, M.P., President of the Board of Trade, wrote to Sir Henry Parkes, of New South Wales, in April, 1895, that "the present policy, the present spirit, of the Liberal party is not merely to maintain the (Imperial) connection, but to develop it into forms that may more perfectly correspond to the altered circumstances of to-day," he was really singing an elegy over the grave of the disintegrationist school, and offering the compliments of the present and the future to a few theoretic survivals of the past, such as Mr. Goldwin Smith or Mr. John Morley.

The Uganda question was a very notable and vivid illustration of this change in opinion and policy. Lord Salisbury's Government in 1892 had practically consented to take over the vast region in Central Africa which goes by that name. Lord Rosebery, when he came into the Foreign Office during the same year, endorsed the policy, and announced his approval of the process of "pegging out claims for posterity" which was going on there. Early in 1893, Sir Gerald Portal was despatched to make a report upon the country, and to organize it in some more satisfactory form than had yet been attempted.

At this tremendous departure from the old Liberal doctrine of non-extension, Mr. Labouchere and a few other Radicals were aghast. They did not think it conceivable that Mr. Gladstone could have consented to such a great annexation of territory. Accordingly, on March 20th, Mr. Labouchere moved in the House to reduce the vote of supply by the amount which the Portal mission would cost, and denounced Lord Rosebery with vigour as "the High Priest of Jingoism." But the speaker had overlooked the fact that times had changed, and with them Mr. Gladstone. Whether it be true or not that Lord Rosebery had something to do with his decision, it was none the less apparent that the statesman who had always been nervous about the extension of the Empire was now in sympathy with this signal action. In his speech, he referred to "the great mission of the Anglo-Saxon race in colonizing the world," and admitted frankly "the colonizing necessities which have arisen in certain parts of the world, and which have become not only a duty, but a point of honour on the part of this country to meet." And the crowning feature of the debate was Mr. Chamberlain's expression of strong Imperial sentiments, and his statement that he believed the people of England had determined to take their full share in the disposition of these new lands, and in the work of civilization which had begun. The debate was significantly and fittingly closed by both Liberals and Conservatives voting in favour of what was the practical annexation of an immense territory.

Looking back now upon Mr. Gladstone's long career, and its direct or indirect connection with the Empire, it may be said to present a curious commingling of great opportunities, of valuable performance, of dangerous driftings. Upon the whole, his policy voiced the current desire to give the Colonies free government and free play, and in this respect was greatly beneficial. He also held the reins of his party with sufficient force to prevent it falling as a united organization into the ranks of the Manchester School—although the drift was at one time dangerous—and here, again, he performed a great service. And although some of the opportunities for welding the Empire together were not seized as they arose, yet a statesman can hardly be blamed for not always running in advance of public opinion, and in the teeth of a prevailing sentiment—or lack of sentiment.

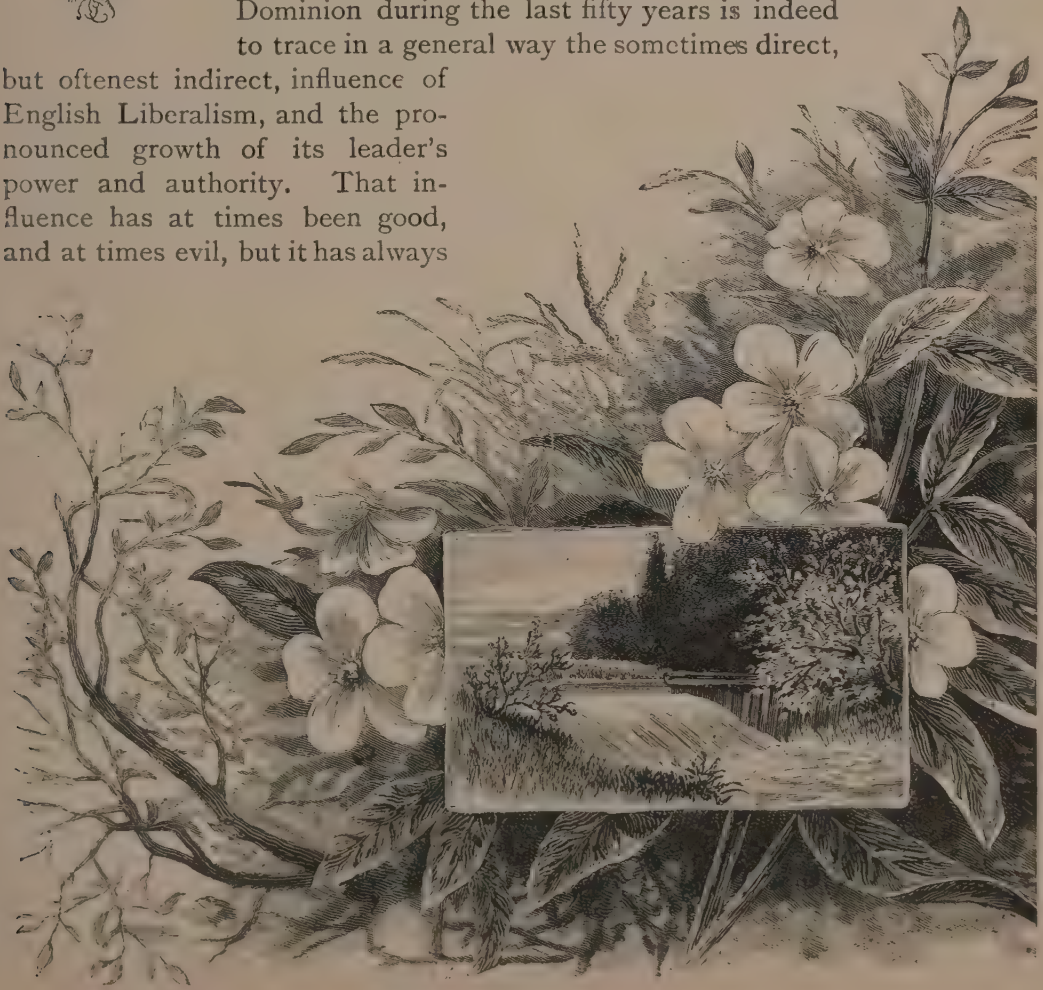
In these latter days, however, the past is buried, and Mr. Gladstone, together with the leaders of both parties in England, as well as the bulk of the nation, can sincerely and conscientiously join with Tennyson in patriotic harmony, and say:

"To all the loyal hearts who long
  To keep our English Empire whole!
To all our noble sons, the strong
  New England of the Southern pole!
To England under Indian skies,
  To those dark millions of her realm!
To Canada, whom we love and prize,
  Whatever statesman hold the helm.
    Hands all round!
  God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great name of England drink, my friends,
And all her glorious Empire, round and round."

CHAPTER XXXI.

MR. GLADSTONE AND CANADA.

A GREAT English political leader must during a long career exert a necessarily strong personal influence upon the external states of the Empire. And as the mutual play of policies, the interchange of opinions, and the growth of knowledge and interests continue to expand, this force of character, or career, or reputation, or popularity, must increase in volume and power. In the development of Canada, and the formation of Canadian parties and political principles, Mr. Gladstone has therefore had no inconsiderable share. To follow the history of the Dominion during the last fifty years is indeed to trace in a general way the sometimes direct, but oftenest indirect, influence of English Liberalism, and the pronounced growth of its leader's power and authority. That influence has at times been good, and at times evil, but it has always



been weighty. The expansion of the Colonies during that period has been equalled by the growth of English Liberalism, as we now understand the word, and the one has naturally acted and re-acted upon the other.

Mr. Gladstone entered Parliamentary life with the apparent intention of devoting himself to the guardianship of the Colonies and the defence of the Church. Hansard reveals speech after speech delivered by him upon Colonial matters between 1832 and 1852. The stormy events in Canada appear to have especially interested the young politician. He looked at them from the strong Tory standpoint, saw dim possibilities of future secession if the slightest encouragement were given by England to the Reformers of the day, and over-estimated, as did every one else in the Imperial Parliament, the scope and effect of the Rebellion of 1837. The Rev. Dr. Ryerson, in his Memoirs, tells an amusing story of how he once "coached" Mr. Gladstone. It was in, or about, 1836, and a certain Dr. Duncombe had brought home William Lyon Mackenzie's famous petition for reform. The English Radicals had naturally taken up the cause of the Canadian Liberals, and Hume and Roebuck, Cobbett and O'Connell, were in expressed and active sympathy with their aims and movements.

During the consideration of the question which followed in the House, Dr. Ryerson says: "I was requested to take a seat under the gallery, and, while Mr. Hume was speaking as the mouthpiece of Dr. Duncombe, I furnished Lord Sandon and Mr. W. E. Gladstone with the material for answers to Mr. Hume's mis-statements. Mr. Gladstone's quick perception, with Lord Sandon's promptings, kept the House in a roar of laughter at Mr. Hume's expense for more than an hour; the wonder being how Mr. Gladstone was so thoroughly informed on Canadian affairs. No member of the House of Commons seemed to be more astonished and confounded than Mr. Hume himself."

But aside from this little incident, the young politician had already won the careful consideration of the House for anything he might say upon Canadian topics, and he endeavoured to prove his acquaintanceship with at least one side of the Canadian situation in subsequent discussions. During a prolonged debate in March, 1837, he curiously enough indicated at the same time his extreme Toryism, and a view of the Colonial relationship which for many years afterwards remained a sort of gospel with the Liberal party. He commenced by approving the proposals to restrict and limit certain rights of self-government in Lower Canada, upon the ground that the rebellion and its causes constituted an Imperial question, and involved British consent or otherwise to the separation of Lower Canada from the Mother Country. This he was strongly opposed to, although he did not "regard that consummation as one necessarily and at all times undesirable." He then pictured the Colonial relationship as being similar to that of the family, which inevitably reaches a stage in its history when "emancipation" is desired by the children, or by some of them.

That time, however, had not come, "and," continued the speaker, "I hold it to be perfectly vain and fallacious, and, I will add, dishonest, while separation is not proposed as the object in view, to claim for the Houses of Assembly in that country a character of entire equality with the Imperial Parliament in this. . . . I had, indeed, hoped that our discussions on the repeal of the Union had set at rest the fallacious supposition that independent legislatures could permanently co-exist and co-operate under the same Crown." These views were, of course, largely theoretical, but they illustrate, in the first place, his approximation to opinions held, long afterwards, by another party than that to which he then belonged; and, in the second place, show a most remarkable divergence from the modern conception of Colonial government.

In later speeches upon the same topic, he was more practical, but still pre-eminently Conservative in his opinions. On December 22nd of the same year, Mr. Gladstone told the House that no real oppression had been proved to exist in Canada; that both persons and property were absolutely secure, except for "the machinations of popular agitators"; that the law was duly administered, and the taxes mild or hardly perceptible at all. And then he asked if "on the ground of speculative and organic change, which promised no advantage to the Colonies, and which must prove utterly destructive of the analogy and harmony which had existed between the Mother Country and the Canadians, they were to be terrified from maintaining that which they believed to be just on the first manifestation of insurrection." He went on to urge that a conciliatory spirit should be shown, but that nothing be done which would, in the slightest degree, weaken the existing connection. Downing Street rule, in fact, was to be preserved, and responsible government refused as being decidedly dangerous to continued union with Great Britain.

Such was the undoubted Conservative belief of those days, both in Canada and England, and it can only be defended upon the grounds of rashness and occasional disloyalty in the utterances of the much-aggrieved Reformers, coupled with a strong, and not unreasonable, fear of any Americanization of the Colonial Government and Colonial opinion. The memories of 1812 still lived in Canadian hearts and made many Tories, while pro-American utterances, such as those contained in Mackenzie's well-known revolutionary appeal, helped to confuse English sentiment and complicate English policy. As time passed, however, fresh light seemed to break in upon Mr. Gladstone's conception of the situation. Speaking in the House, early in 1838, he declared that:

> "If it were true, as he believed it was, that the grievances alleged by the Canadians as an excuse for rebellion could not be substantiated, and if there were any defects in the internal Constitution of Canada, or any hardships in the working of the administration, they were manifestly such as the Provincial Assembly itself ought to remove."

There was in this a certain concession to the general principle of self-government. Then the speaker went on to make an interesting comparison between the American colonists of earlier days and the Canadian rebels—whose numbers and influence were, by the way, so greatly exaggerated and misunderstood in England. He pointed out that the grievances of the Americans, especially those relating to taxation, had not been redressed, while of the Canadian grievances "there was none which Parliament had not removed, or which it had not declared its anxiety to remove." The Americans had been willing to make greater sacrifices to preserve the connection with England than the Canadians had ever been asked to make. "We had negotiated with the Canadians to induce them to grant a civil list for seven years, while it would astonish the House to hear that Dr. Franklin had proposed to grant one for a century."

Such were Mr. Gladstone's views during an early and critical period in Canadian history. They have since been greatly changed or modified, but hardly in as remarkable a degree as have the institutions, the position, the prospects, and the environment of the Canadian people themselves. In 1840, he aided the passage of the Canada Government Bill, which had been presented to the House by Lord John Russell, and which many of the Tories opposed as giving too much latitude to the Colonists. By this measure the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada were to be united under one legislature and government. In his speech, Mr. Gladstone reiterated his views upon the retention of the Colonies, expressed the belief that many of the difficulties in Canada were due to Lord Durham's "mistaken report," and seemed to fear that British connection was becoming more and more unpopular. The bill, of course, passed; the provinces were joined in a union which they maintained until the greater one of 1867 was formed; and Mr. Poulett Thomson, to whose skilful influence as Governor-General the success of the scheme was greatly due, became Lord Sydenham. It is said, by the way, that he wanted his title to be Lord St. Lawrence, which would certainly have been both appropriate and picturesque.

Shortly after this speech of Mr. Gladstone's—which the Newark *Times* declared should be "written in letters of gold and hung up over every Canadian hearth"—he supported, by vote, a Ministerial measure in connection with the troublous Clergy Reserve question. It went against his Church principles to do so, but he seems to have thought that conditions altered circumstances very greatly. During the prolonged controversy in Canada over this matter, the Conservative Churchmen there appear to have expected strong support, rather than opposition, from Mr. Gladstone, in any legislation which might come before the Imperial Parliament. In a letter written March 16th, 1853, to the Duke of Newcastle—the Colonial Secretary at the time—and just before the final settlement of the question, Bishop Strachan, of Toronto, refers to this feeling in language of characteristic vigour:

"I feel bitterly, my Lord Duke, on this subject. Till I heard of your Grace's despatch, I had fully trusted in Mr. Gladstone and his friends, of whom you are one, notwithstanding the present doubtful administration, and I still argued in my heart, though not without misgivings, that the Church was safe. I had cherished her with my best energies in this distant corner of God's dominions; and, after many trials and difficulties, I was beholding her with joy enlarging her tent, lengthening her cords, and strengthening her stakes, but now the joy is turned into grief and sadness, for darkness and tribulation are approaching to arrest her onward progress."

Despite his natural and gloomy forebodings, however, the veteran Bishop was destined to see the arrangement turn out for the best. Meantime, Sir Charles Bagot had succeeded Lord Sydenham, and carried on, for a brief period, and to a certain extent, his work in the slow and weary development of Constitutional Government. It is interesting to note in this connection that Sir Stratford Canning, afterwards the famous diplomatist, the "Great Eltchi" of Kinglake, and known to the world as Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, had been first offered the post of Governor-General. In 1846, Earl Cathcart was appointed temporarily by Mr. Gladstone, who, for the moment, was acting as Colonial Secretary in Sir Robert Peel's Government. A little later Lord Elgin came out with the avowed object, as he put it, of aiding "the generous endeavour to impart to these rising communities the full advantages of British laws, British institutions, and British freedom; to assist them in maintaining unimpaired, it may be strengthening and confirming, the bonds attaching the outlying parts of the Empire to the Throne."

And nobly he redeemed this pledge in the face of opposition and indifference at home, and of trouble and misunderstanding in Canada. One incident of his administration may be mentioned here, not as directly connected with Mr. Gladstone, but as giving an interesting expression of opinion by the Liberal leader in Upper Canada regarding views held by the Liberal Premier in England. It was early in 1850, when the Hon. Robert Baldwin was Canadian Attorney-General, and what would now be termed Premier, that Lord John Russell made his reference in the Commons to an expectation of the future severance of Colonial connection. Lord Elgin, in a letter to Earl Grey—written from Toronto on March 23rd—states that Mr. Baldwin asked him if he had read this speech, and, on being answered in the affirmative, said: "For myself, if the anticipation therein expressed proves to be well founded, my interest in public affairs is gone forever." Curiously enough, he did retire from public life during the succeeding year.

About this time, Lord Elgin was involved in the riots following his assent to the Rebellion Losses Bill. The sad mistake made by many Tories in using violent language against the Governor-General, and in allowing public or private exasperation to express itself in the burning of the Parliament buildings and the mobbing of Ministers, naturally called English attention to the nature of the legislation which had caused such a turmoil. That there was weakness in the Canadian Ministry's method of explaining the bill, and that its final operation was very different from what was expected and indicated in its terms, is now evident, and affords some excuse for the excitement of the times. Had it been clearly understood that men who had been rebels in 1837 were not to be included in the indemnity offered by the measure to those who had suffered losses during that period, the trouble might have been entirely averted. But the bill appeared to give the opposite impression.

When the matter came up in the Imperial House, Mr. Gladstone strongly supported the Canadian Tories in their view of the case, though not in any violence for which they may have been indirectly or directly responsible. It was claimed by Roebuck and others that no right of interference existed, as the money voted was purely Canadian; but Mr. Gladstone held that the House of Commons had a right to interfere in all Imperial concerns, and that this was one. On the 14th of June, 1849, he himself reintroduced the subject, and declared certain parts of the Canadian measure to involve the very foundation of all social order; to clearly demand Imperial consideration; and to be inconsistent with the honour of the Crown, as permitting, by ambiguities, the indemnity and reward of persons who had been guilty of high treason.

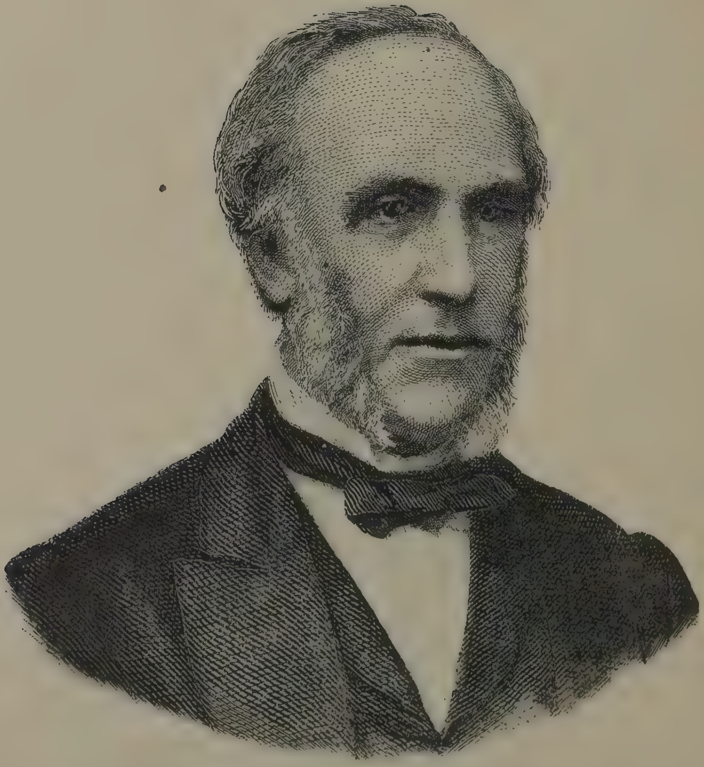
He stated the intention of the framers of the Act to be the admission of former rebels to its benefits, and at the direct expense of the loyal community, and denied that the Canadian people desired its passage, or had been allowed to properly express themselves upon its principle. He, therefore, demanded an assurance that rebels should not in any way be compensated, and that reasonable evidence should be required that the parties receiving public money under its terms had not participated in the rising of 1837. If the Government refused this assurance, he would ask the House to suspend the operation of the Act until the Colonial Legislature had an opportunity of amending it. Lord John Russell promptly announced that the Government intended to allow it to go into operation, and refused to give any assurance upon the subject. In a subsequent vote, he was sustained by 291 to 150. Thus ended an incident which is curious as showing Mr. Gladstone's conception at that time of the nature of Colonial self-government.

Speaking many years afterwards—May 10th, 1886—in the House of Commons, the leader of the Liberal party referred to this period in a rather interesting and reminiscent way:

> "I sat in Parliament during the whole of the Canadian controversy, which began in 1838, and I even took what was for me, as a young member, an active part in the discussions on the subject. What was the Canadian controversy—what was the issue in the

THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD,

Prime Minister of Canada, 1867-74, 1878-91.



THE HON. GEORGE BROWN, M.P.,

Canadian Liberal Leader.

case of Canada? Government from Downing Street. These few words embrace the whole controversy.

> "What was the cry of those who resisted the concession of autonomy to Canada? It was the cry which has slept for a long time, and which has acquired vigour from sleeping; it was the cry with which we are now becoming familiar, the cry of the unity of the Empire. . . . In those days, habitually in the House of Commons, the mass of the people of Canada were denounced as rebels."

He went on to tell O'Connell's story in connection with Papineau and the French-Canadian wing of the rebellion: "The case was exactly the case of Ireland, with this difference, that in Canada the agitator has got the 'O' at the end of his name instead of at the beginning." In 1849, Mr. Gladstone had commenced to take an interest in the Hudson's Bay Company, and the question of its jurisdiction and usefulness in the vast Canadian territories under its control. He had, in that year, moved an address to the Crown, asking for an investigation into the Company's rights and privileges. Eight years afterwards, he supported a motion by Mr. Labouchere—subsequently Lord Taunton—for a Committee of Inquiry into its affairs, and this was carried. Speaking in the House on July 20th, 1858, he declared that "a great part of this country is highly valuable for colonizing purposes, and it is impossible to state in too strong language the proposition that the Hudson's Bay Company is by its very existence and its character the enemy of colonization. All its traditions, all its habits, all its establishments—the fruit of generations—all its purposes and arrangements, are directed to purposes the attainment of which require that colonization should be absolutely excluded." But the speaker was a dozen years in advance of his time, and it was not until the new Dominion had developed that the rights of the Company were purchased, and the country really thrown open for settlement.

The way in which financial considerations may affect a political leader's view of things is illustrated in Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards the Intercolonial Railway project. In 1846, when Secretary of State for the Colonies, he gave instructions for a general survey of the route—the idea being to establish a military road. Then matters dragged until, in 1861, a delegation, composed of the Hon. Joseph Howe, of Nova Scotia, and Mr. (afterwards Sir Leonard) Tilley, of New Brunswick, were introduced to the new Chancellor of the Exchequer by Sir Edward Watkin, with a view to getting a loan guaranteed. We are told that they were received in a sort of working room or den, where placards, papers, letters, magazines, and blue-books were piled in every direction, until it looked as if "the window had been left open, and the contents of a miscellaneous newspaper and book shop had blown into the apartment." Mr. Gladstone was perfectly civil, but "looked bored and worried." Referring to the Atlantic mail subsidies—which he described as "unsound"—and to general guarantees or aids of this kind, he spoke of them as "helps to other people who ought to help themselves."

Needless to say, the encouragement given to the deputation was not very great. Some six years after Confederation, however, and during Mr. Gladstone's first Premiership, the question was settled by a British guarantee of a Colonial loan of $7,500,000, in return for Canada's withdrawal of the Fenian Raids claims at Washington. In 1859, Mr. Gladstone gave some evidence before a Defence Committee which clearly voiced the prevailing sentiment regarding the obligations of local defence, and presaged his own policy of a dozen years later in withdrawing the troops from the Colonies: "No community," he declared, "which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own defences is really, or can be in the full sense of the word, a free community. The privileges of freedom and the burdens of freedom are absolutely associated together." The correctness of this statement has since made it a truism, but the general views of the greater number of those who have expressed themselves in that way are now greatly changed. At this time, and to a good many people, the "privileges of freedom" could only be adequately obtained after separation from the Mother Country. Now it is clearly understood that such privileges are better, safer, and more abundant, in union with the Empire than in any position of external isolation.

And so strongly had the first-mentioned conception taken hold of the public mind that many Conservatives objected to the sending of troops to Canada at the time of the Trent affair, and thought the American troubles afforded a capital opportunity for putting theory into practice and teaching the Canadians self-reliance. But the Government of which Mr. Gladstone was a leading member declined to take this view, and raised the forces in British America to 10,000 men. Later, when danger appeared to be over, the troops were removed, and the militia force of to-day established by local and voluntary effort. Upon this general question of defending the Colonies, Bright and the members of the Manchester School were, at this crisis, very sharply separated from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone believed in local defence by the local authorities, but he was fully prepared to stand by the Colonies in the event of war, and with all the strength of England. An illustration of this difference of opinion occurred early in 1865, in connection with the proposal of Lord Hartington—Under-Secretary, and, shortly afterwards, Secretary of State for War—that a vote of $250,000 be given for the fortification of Quebec.

A lengthy debate ensued upon the whole policy of defence, but, in the end, the vote was granted by a large majority. During its continuance, Bright wrote to Cobden, and in reference to Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, who was to speak upon the matter: "I wish that you could be in the House when he comes on. You understand the details of the question better than any other man in the House, and I think you could knock over the stupid proposition to spend English money on the fortifications at Quebec." A little while afterwards, on March 20th, he summarized, in another letter, his view of the general situation:

> "We are told, indeed, of the 'loyalty' of the Canadians; but this is an ironical term to apply to people who neither pay our taxes, nor obey our laws, nor hold themselves liable to fight our battles; who would repudiate our right to the sovereignty of an acre of their territory, and who claim the right of imposing their own customs duties, even to the exclusion of our manufactures. . . . A sham connection and dependence which will snap asunder if it should ever be put to the strain of stern reality."

Mr. Bright had apparently forgotten the war of 1812, and a good many other things, in writing this letter, but it is none the less interesting as showing the extreme English view of a situation in which there was also an extreme Canadian view. During the debates upon Confederation, when, in 1867, the British North America Act came before the Imperial Parliament, the general question of defence was one of the chief subjects of discussion. The commerce of the Colonies was not much of a factor at a time when England had just captured the carrying trade of the United States, and even entertained bright hopes of capturing its market also. And the other point of debate was the future of Canada—the majority appearing to think independence extremely probable. The Confederation policy in Canada had been greatly encouraged by the English Liberals, and by Mr. Cardwell, as Colonial Secretary. When, in June, 1866, they left office, Lord Carnarvon and the Duke of Buckingham, who, in turn, administered Colonial affairs in Lord Derby's Government, also gave it every possible aid. But this help does not seem to have been offered in the spirit of enthusiasm which would naturally actuate men who really felt that they were building up empires, and legislating for future millions in a great State.

Sir John Macdonald, in a most important letter, published in Mr. Pope's "Life" of the Canadian Premier, tells us that the whole matter was treated as though it involved two or three outlying English parishes, and states that we owe to Lord Stanley—afterwards the Earl of Derby, and the hero of the New Guinea episode—the substitution of the word "Dominion" for that of "Kingdom," which appeared in the original draft of the Canadian Bill, because it might "wound the susceptibilities of the Yankees." When a Tory politician took this line, it can be understood how near the Empire really came to disruption during those years! Mr. Gladstone, however, assumed a distinct stand upon the question of defence, and did so in defiance of the Cobdenite wing of his party. Speaking on March 28th, 1867, shortly after leaving office, and within a year or so of becoming Premier, he declared that the purpose of Confederation was to increase the wealth and strength of the Colony, to make it self-reliant, and enhance its resources for defence.

He added the belief that true defence must always depend upon the energy of a free people, and that it was impossible to combine Colonial self-government with local protection, at the expense of the distant Mother Country. And then he referred in strong terms to the Fenian aggressions upon Canada as "a wicked outrage, hardly to be paralleled in the annals of piracy itself," and as being actuated by a desire to wound British honour and to injure British interests. This incident he thought quite sufficient to prove the necessity of Canada assuming, in an organized way, the defence of its own frontier.

> "It seems to me," he continued, "to be essential that British North America should undertake the responsibility of her own defence, but I do not mean to say that in case of actual danger the armies of England are not to be employed in aid of the Colonial defences; on the contrary, every effort will be made by this country, in connection with British North America, to aid and protect the colonists from aggression; but that is a totally different matter from maintaining, by a large expenditure of money to be paid out of the British Treasury, a defensive force in Canada. So far from any tie being broken, I believe that the connection between the Mother Country and the Colonies will be closer than it would if we maintained a standing army in Canada for its security,"

As the debates proceeded, the ignorance and indifference in certain quarters concerning the great future before the new Dominion became painfully conspicuous. Mr. Gladstone had referred to the desire of Canadians to copy as closely as possible the institutions of the Mother Country, when Mr. Bright responded with the remark that "if they should prefer to unite themselves with the United States I should not complain." Mr. Chichester Fortescue—afterwards Lord Carlingford, and member of several Liberal Cabinets—expressed a desire for the continuance of cordial friendship, "whether in union with this country, or at any distant day separate from it." Mr. Lowe "deprecated our being considered responsible for the confederation in any way, or as having erected it as a sort of rival to the American confederation." Earl Russell evidently had not forgotten his speech of some years before—when sitting in the Commons—and declared that "this union will place the Colonies on such a footing that, in the event of their ever being desirous of severing the connection, they would be enabled to choose their future position in the world regardless of any external disturbing influences."

All this talk, and much more of the same kind, while not important, taken individually, indicates, in the lump, a state of things in which the ties of union were very greatly attenuated. Lord Monck, who enthusiastically aided Sir John Macdonald and the other Canadian leaders in the earlier work of Confederation, is known to have made unguarded references to a hope of independence as being the real reason of much English encouragement given to the undertaking, and Mr. Froude adds the evidence of his authority to this view by saying in a letter—April 25th, 1892—that "the Governor-General recommended the

Canadians to prepare for separation at an early period, and they were given to understand that if they preferred independence the Mother Country would not interfere." Looking back now, it seems wonderful that this stream of tendency did not have the effect of bringing about the result which so many expected. So far as Canada is concerned, it did create, in many minds, a corresponding sentiment of indifference to British connection.

Had this Canadian feeling not been checked by the sturdy British sentiment of George Brown, the Imperial enthusiasm of Sir John Macdonald, and the loyalty of Sir George Cartier, it might have really developed into a strong separatist agitation. And in this connection, Mr. Gladstone's reiterated declaration of the intention of England to stand by the Colony in case of need rendered vital service by helping the loyal spirit in Canada, and checking those at home who were bent upon hastening in some practical way the end they desired. Then came the aggressive blows of Disraeli. The relative place of the two men in this matter may be briefly summarized in the statement that Gladstone held in check the separatist tendency in a rather cold, but practical, way, while Disraeli revived Imperial enthusiasm, and secured the future by bringing back to the people's minds the real spirit of Empire. Mr. Gladstone has never been regarded as an Imperialist, but no Canadian can forget the historic fact already referred to, and again mentioned in the following extract from one of his Midlothian speeches in 1880. Nor should the environment of indifference amongst English leaders of the moment, which made his attitude so important, be overlooked:

> "At that time, whether with or without cause, there was considerable alarm in Canada in connection with the great war that raged in America. There was apprehension that Canada might be attacked by America, because America, at that time, thought she had cause of complaint against us, and the Canadians applied to the Government of Lord Palmerston to know whether he should defend them; and the answer which we made—you may perhaps think even that it was a rash answer, but it certainly was a most decisive answer, and embraced the whole case—the answer made on behalf of Lord Palmerston's Government (and the persons specially employed to frame it were Mr. Secretary Cardwell and myself, with one other Minister)—the answer made was that it would be the duty of Great Britain to defend Canada against external aggression with the whole strength of the Empire."

After Confederation, Canada grew steadily in importance and influence. As its system of self-government became consolidated, its scheme of local defence perfected, its place in the Empire assured, and its peaceful development along British lines more and more a matter of course, the old-time discussions in the Imperial Parliament regarding its internal affairs almost entirely and naturally ceased. During the Home Rule debates it came again to the front in this respect. But aside from that cause, and the foreign complications which arose from time to time, there was little room or reason for Imperial intervention, discussion, or assistance. A pleasant incident occurred in 1884, when the Queen, upon Mr. Gladstone's recommendation, offered a most unusual honour to the Conservative Premier of Canada. The former's letter stated that, "in acknowledgment of your long and distinguished services, Her Majesty graciously authorizes me to propose that you should receive the honour of a Grand Cross of the Bath." Sir John Macdonald, in reply, gratefully accepted the distinction, and added: "I am especially gratified that this announcement should be made through you, and the honour conferred through your kind intervention." It is worthy of note that Mr. Gladstone had previously, in 1872, recommended Sir John for an Imperial Privy Councillorship—a compliment to a Colonial leader without precedent at the time.

When the Home Rule controversy commenced in 1885, Mr. Gladstone received a good deal of moral support from Canada. Without going into the political or other reasons for the resolutions passed, it may be fairly said that there was really a great deal of sympathy felt for him in his memorable effort. On April 17th, after an all-night sitting, the Quebec Legislature adopted a resolution expressing satisfaction at Mr. Gladstone's attempt to solve the Home Rule question. In his reply to the Speaker of the Assembly, he expressed his deep gratitude for "the wise and liberal view" thus entertained. On May 10th, the Nova Scotia Legislature recorded its warm sympathy with the Liberal leader's efforts to "secure local self-government, and alleviate the evils of the Irish land tenure system." The Manitoba Assembly discussed, but refused to pass, a similar resolution, on the ground that the matter did not properly come within their jurisdiction. On the 6th of May, Mr. Blake introduced a motion of congratulation into the Dominion Parliament, which, after considerable amendment and discussion, was carried.

The Hon. Edward Blake has, perhaps, had more personal and political intercourse with Mr. Gladstone than any other prominent Canadian. In 1885, and while still leader of the Dominion Liberal party, he was, for a time, the guest of Lord Rosebery at Dalmeny Park, and, during his stay, heard some of Mr. Gladstone's great speeches in the political visit he was then paying Midlothian. At a banquet given Lord Rosebery, in Edinburgh, by the Scottish Liberal Club, and attended by nearly all the leaders of the party in that section of the Kingdom, Mr. Blake was present, and spoke at some length and with characteristic eloquence. He afterwards retired from Canadian politics, joined the Irish party at Westminster, and helped the English Liberal leader so far as it was in his power. Early in December, 1892, he presented a portrait of Mr. Gladstone, painted by Mr. J. Colin Forbes—a Canadian, and under the auspices of Canadian Liberals—to the National Liberal Club.

The occasion was an interesting one, and the speeches of Lord Rosebery, Mr. Blake, and the Hon. G. W. Ross, Ontario Minister of Education, were worthy of it. Mr. Blake was naturally eulogistic, and, in the course of his speech, declared that "Canadians, for whom he was speaking, were filled with admiration when they observed an aged statesman, at a time of life far beyond that allowed to the majority of the human race, undertake a task before which the bravest and most vigorous might have quailed, undismayed by the crash in his own party, undaunted by the schism amongst those for whom he was especially labouring, undeterred by the timid and nervous apprehension of some, and by the not unnatural desire of others to place in the forefront domestic reforms which they thought more pressing than the Irish question." Lord Rosebery, in his beautifully worded address, described Mr. Gladstone's courage and sympathy as being his two most remarkable qualities.

During the many and crowded years of which this presentation almost marked the active close, Mr. Gladstone has, of course, come into more or less frequent personal contact with Canadian public men. Sir John Macdonald met him frequently during the long Confederation discussions, and in later years. Mr. Sandford Fleming visited him at Hawarden more than a decade ago. The Hon. William McDougall bears with him in his political retirement a similar memory.* Sir John Thompson was looking forward to, and had accepted, with pleasure, an invitation to meet him at his country home, when stricken down by death at Windsor Castle. The great Liberal leader had been a schoolfellow and friend of Lord Elgin, whose memory Canada has such reason to prize. He appointed Lord Dufferin Governor-General, and thus gave that statesman an opportunity to render the Dominion such signal service by his speeches of silvery eloquence, and his subsequent interest in its progress. He sent out Lord Lansdowne to a career of dignified popularity, and his warm friend, the Earl of Aberdeen, to a position which he has filled with marked ability and success.

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*My Dear Mr. Hopkins:

My acquaintance with Mr. Gladstone (personally) was very brief. Having met him in London in 1873, he invited me to pay him a visit at his country seat, Hawarden, where I spent a few days very pleasantly. He was then in his prime, a fine specimen of the English country gentlemen, and at the same time a busy man of affairs. In our rapid walks—in his case for exercise, rather than the inspection of his fields—he was much interested with my account of Canadian life in the backwoods, and especially with my description of the sugar bush and the process of "tapping" trees and converting the sap into sugar by the process of boiling in large kettles over a furnace in the woods.

He was quite anxious to try the experiment with trees in his own park, but I dissuaded him by explaining that only one tree—the maple—was known to produce sugar in Canada, and, as I had not yet seen a sugar maple in his park, I thought we had better wait till we found one. Being thwarted in the sugar scheme, we resumed our discussion on the political relations of British America with the Mother Country

I confess that his forecast of the future of Canada was not quite so assuring as I had expected, but I soon discovered that his apprehension of the inability of Canada to maintain her independence without constant, and probably costly, assistance from the Mother Country was the serious question to be dealt with. Nearly a quarter of a century has passed since my visit to Hawarden, but I have never ceased to respect the great Imperial statesman, and, with few exceptions, to approve the measures he has suggested or helped to consummate.

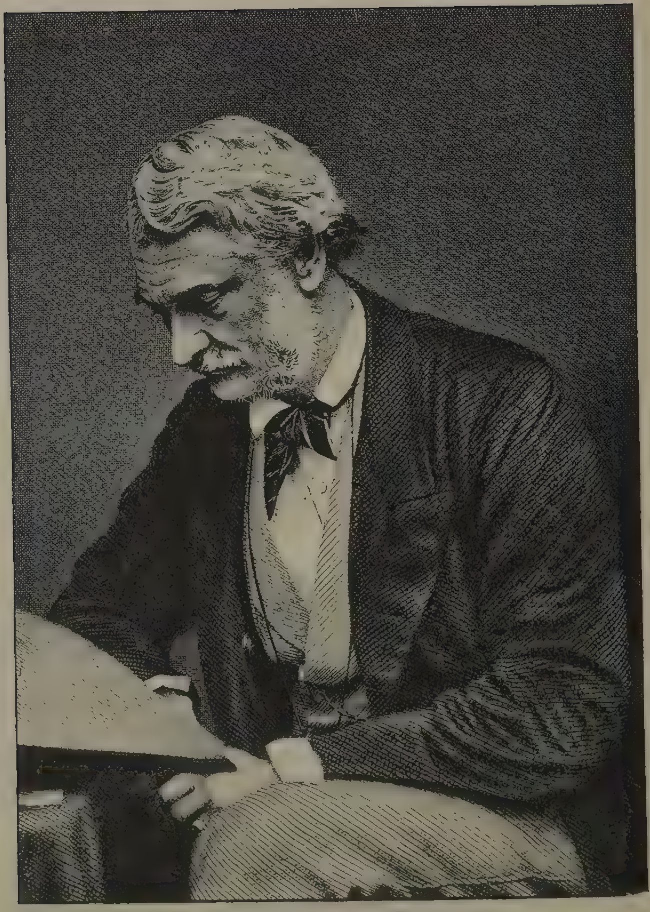
Very faithfully yours,

Ottawa, June 17th, 1895. Wm. McDougall.

But there are many considerations which cannot be more than touched upon in estimating the influence of such a career for good or evil upon the destinies of the younger countries of the Empire. Leaving aside certain political considerations, which many will deem to have had an injurious influence or tendency, and others will believe to be his highest glory and honour, there can be no doubt whatever of the power for good which Mr. Gladstone in his personal character and Christian conduct has wielded in Canada as well as in Britain. Sir John Macdonald once stated that, for instance, the result of the establishment of a Divorce Court in England had fully borne out the Liberal leader's contentions in his long and historic fight against it, and he (Sir John) hoped the day would never come when the Dominion would have one.

Properly looked at, therefore, and with politics eliminated, there is much in the memory of Mr. Gladstone's career to help Canada on its splendid path of development—with the beginnings of which he has had so intimate a connection—and towards the Imperial consummation of the future.

SPENCER COMPTON CAVENDISH, 7TH DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,
AND MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON.



LORD JOHN MANNERS, 7TH DUKE OF RUTLAND.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MR. GLADSTONE AS AN ORATOR.

LORD MACAULAY once described Parliamentary government as government by speaking. If this epigram were true, and as a rule epigrams are only half truths, Mr. Gladstone would be the greatest master in the art of governing whom the world has ever seen. As it is, he stands pre-eminent amongst modern orators for versatility and copiousness of speech, for enthusiasm and vigour of style, for facility of language and popular charm. Other speakers may have exceeded him in pure debating skill, in wit or sarcasm, in cutting words or brilliant invective, in clear analysis, or even in momentary power over the masses. But they have been very few. And in no single case have so many of these qualities or gifts been concentrated in one person.

It is this combination of oratorical powers which has made Mr. Gladstone so great a speaker. When Sir Robert Walpole first spoke in the House of Commons, his manner was ungraceful, he stuttered and stammered, and seemed to lack words to express himself. When Disraeli made his initial effort, his appearance was so extraordinary that the House laughed—and his enemies for the moment triumphed. O'Connell could hold a vast and stormy mob in the hollow of his hand, but his hapless vulgarisms marred the great influence he might have wielded in the House of Commons:

> "Pass by his faults, his art be here allowed—
> Mighty as Chatham, give him but a crowd;
> Hear him in Senates, second-rate at best,
> Clear in a statement, happy in a jest."

Sir Robert Peel, with marvellous powers of clear reasoning and lucid statement, with a knowledge of Parliament—its business, debate, impulses, and character—only equalled by Walpole in a previous century, was not a pleasing or popular speaker. Lord John Russell, with wide experience in debate, great resourcefulness, and power of clear expression, had physical deficiencies which would have kept most men from even dreaming of the oratorical success which he really achieved. And this despite a cold demeanour, which made some one describe his speeches as "the British Constitution preserved in ice."

Edmund Burke possessed an eloquence which has become a national possession and treasure, but he had the strange faculty of speaking too long, or else at the wrong time, and of emptying the House of Commons as a consequence. In the words of Goldsmith:

> "Too deep for his hearers, he went on refining,
> And thought of convincing while they thought of dining."

During even his greatest speech—that on American conciliation—he is said, by a contemporary, to have driven the members out of the House. Yet that utterance is a masterpiece and model of eloquent language. Lord Stanley, afterwards Earl of Derby and Premier, had a remarkable sweetness of voice, great debating powers, and boldness of language, but was rash to the verge of danger, and brought upon himself Disraeli's famous designation of "the Rupert of debate" whose charge is irresistible. "But when he has driven the force directly opposed to him off the field, he returns to find his camp in the possession of the enemy." Robert Lowe had physical defects which made his success seem marvellous, and his powers of sarcasm were so great as to render popularity impossible. Bright was a great orator, but not a leader of men in any higher sense than that of being a natural and gifted agitator.

Mr. Gladstone seems, on the other hand, to have been saved from most of these defects, and to have possessed many of the great qualities mentioned. From the first, he had been successful in speaking, graceful in manner, cultured in style. As the years passed on he could hold an audience as even O'Connell, at his best, could never have done, and excelled Peel in lucidness of financial statement, while equalling him in knowledge of Parliamentary procedure. From early days also, he possessed gifts of bearing, and appearance, and personal magnetism, such as alone would almost ensure oratorical success, while his power over the Commons became, in time, only equalled by his influence over the masses of the people. Though very copious in speech, enthusiastic in advocacy, and, at times, passionate in debate, he could hardly be termed rash. And his mastery of English equalled that of Bright, while he possessed a legislative faculty and political prescience which "the tribune of the people" admittedly lacked.

This gift of oratory is a marvellous power. Its history constitutes the political greatness and marks the national littleness of modern England. The mother of Parliaments has seen four great schools of eloquence, excluding, of course, the earlier and more scattered efforts of Bolingbroke, Hampden, Pym, Hyde, or Strafford. The first was marked by the dominance of Chatham and Burke, Sheridan, Murray (Lord Mansfield), Walpole, Pulteney, and Lord Chesterfield. The second included William Pitt, Fox, Grattan, Windham, Canning, Plunkett, and Tierney. The third was dominated by Peel, Brougham, Lyndhurst, Sheil, O'Connell, Palmerston, Gladstone, Derby, Lowe, Disraeli, Russell, Cobden, and Bright. The fourth is the distinctly modern school represented by Gladstone, Chamberlain, Salisbury, Balfour, Argyle, Selborne, Rosebery, Asquith, and others. Yet, strictly speaking, there were only two great Ministers of the century who have held their position, in part, or in whole, through the influence of oratory. The one was Pitt, the other Gladstone. The one commenced the century as Premier, the other very nearly ended it in the same elevation. During the long interval between these periods, there were great Prime Ministers who were also remarkable speakers—Canning, Peel, Russell, Derby, Disraeli, Palmerston—but they held their places not so much through the power of oratory, though that at times might have great weight, as because of skill in Parliamentary debate, personal popularity, ability in party management, able administration, and other reasons of similar force.

Pitt controlled Parliament by pure eloquence. And in days when that meant government—even, at times, against the will of a majority of the people—he was supreme; although the King might occasionally furnish a check or put the brakes upon his policy. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, dominated Parliament at a period when that body really represented the people, and he did more than that, and more than Pitt, by the nature of things, could do—he dominated the popular will of Great Britain by the force of his oratory. And their speaking seems to have possessed many characteristics in common. Mr. Lecky's "History of England in the Eighteenth Century" describes the oratory of Pitt in a sentence which might be almost transcribed as a picture of Mr. Gladstone's own style and powers:

> "Pitt had every requisite of a great debater; perfect self-possession; an unbroken flow of sonorous and dignified language; great quickness and cogency of reasoning, and especially of reply; an admirable gift of lucid and methodical statement; an extraordinary skill in arranging the course and symmetry of an unpremeditated speech; a memory singularly strong and singularly accurate. No one knew better how to turn and retort arguments, to seize in a moment on a weak point or an unguarded phrase, to evade issues which it was not convenient to press too closely, to conceal, if necessary, his sentiments and his intentions under a cloud of vague, brilliant, and imposing verbiage."

One important difference there was. Mr. Gladstone has always been more or less disturbed by hostile criticism—especially so in later years—and has permitted men of infinitely less weight and minor position to torment him into exhibitions of anger, restlessness, and lack of self-command which were far from dignified, and which proved as painful to his friends as they were delightful to his adversaries. But, once upon his feet, he was master of himself, his subject, and his audience. To win the highest rank, or even high rank, as an orator in the British Parliament is, however, one of the most difficult things in the world. The traditions of eloquence are so many and so varied, the qualities of its past leaders so admittedly great, that for a man to hold undisputed pre-eminence—as Gladstone did, in an oratorical sense, for many years—is an almost unique tribute to his personal powers.

The House of Commons, during a hundred years, has listened to the stately, sonorous style of Pitt, and to that rapid, rushing, overwhelming declamation of Fox, which was like the flame he himself once described as requiring fuel to feed it, and motion to excite it, but which brightened as it burned. It has enjoyed the eloquent imagery of Curran and Sheil, the magnificent, scorching, lava-like, invective and denunciation of Brougham, the wit of Sheridan, the finished and beautiful rhetoric of Canning. It has always been extremely sensitive regarding the style and qualities of those claiming its attention, or making any oratorical pretensions. The man who could melt a multitude into tears; master a mob by the force of language or commanding presence; control an educated gathering by beauty of word-pictures and imagery; often found himself lost and buried in that assembly of six hundred cultivated and indifferent, or critical and contemptuous, representatives of the people. The House, in fact, demanded from its leaders either power of business-like presentation of facts, such as Pitt and Peel and Gladstone excelled in; or skill in debate, such as Russell, Disraeli, Stanley, and Gladstone himself possessed; or else genuine oratorical power, founded upon knowledge, and used with certain peculiar limitations, such as distinguished Macaulay and Bright, and Shiel and Cobden.

Many a man has come up to the Commons with a great reputation for popular oratory, and has failed entirely to catch the ear of the House, or succeed as a Parliamentary debater or speaker. One of the most striking cases of this kind was that of William Johnson Fox. At the great meetings held during the stormy period of agitation against the Corn Laws he had stood supreme, and his power of swaying a popular audience is said to have been greater than that of Bright or Cobden. He had been a Nonconformist minister, and the following sentence from one of his sermons not only illustrates this influence, but affords an exquisite description of Athens and Greek development:

> "There, arose the social spirit to soften and refine her chosen race, and shelter as in a nest her gentleness from the rushing storm of barbarism; there, liberty first built her mountain throne, first called the waves her own, and shouted across them a proud defiance to despotism's banded myriads; there, the arts and graces danced around humanity, and stored man's home with comforts, and strewed his path with roses, and bound his brows with myrtle, and fashioned for him the breathing statue, and summoned him to temples of snowy marble, and charmed his senses with all forms of elegance, and threw over his final sleep their veil of loveliness; there, sprang poetry, like their own fabled goddess, mature at once from the teeming intellect, girt with the arms and armour that defy the assaults of time, and subdue the heart of man; there, matchless orators gave the world a model of perfect eloquence—the soul, the instrument on which they played, and every passion of our nature but a tune which the master's touch called forth at pleasure."

And so he would go on in beautiful, but rather ornate English, and apparently without any limit to his ability of painting pictures in words. Yet he made no mark in Parliament. Macaulay spoke essays, but his ability was so great as to maintain his position and reputation despite that fact. Bulwer Lytton and Robert Lowe, in certain great efforts, attained fame, although they failed to increase it, or make it more than a memory in following years. But the remarkable point in connection with Mr. Gladstone is not that he excelled past or contemporary orators in the making of one, or two, or three great speeches in the House; not that he excelled Peel, or Palmerston, or Disraeli in debating power and influence over the Commons; not because he could always command its attention, and, like Pitt, maintain its interest and admiration while analyzing financial problems with almost rhythmic eloquence; not because he was able to hold vast popular audiences by the charm of an oratory which was really no greater than that of John Bright; it is in the fact that he combined in himself all these powers, though, of course, in varying degrees.

Disraeli states in his "Life of Lord George Bentinck" that although Peel was "the greatest member of Parliament that ever lived," and played on the House of Commons as on an old fiddle, yet "he could not address a public meeting or make an after-dinner speech without being ill at ease, and generally saying something stilted or even a little ridiculous." But since 1853, when he practically took up the mantle of Peel, Mr. Gladstone has grown in Parliamentary power and reputation, while introducing and maintaining the modern system of Ministerial and political oratory in the country. Long before the date mentioned, he had won a success in the House which most men would have considered as the attainment of their ambition. His maiden speech in 1833 won the praise and compliments of Mr. (Lord) Stanley, then Colonial Secretary, and himself an orator of undoubted power. His speech upon Canadian affairs, in January, 1838, brought him the rare honour of a compliment from Peel, who termed it "very able," and the statement from Disraeli, in a private letter, that "Gladstone spoke very well."

A critic, writing in this latter year, remarked that Mr. Gladstone "displays considerable acuteness in replying to an opponent; he is quick in his perception of anything vulnerable in the speech to which he replies, and happy in laying the weak points bare to the House. *He is plausible, even when most in error.* When it suits himself or his party, he can apply himself with the strictest closeness to the real points at issue; when to evade the point is deemed most politic, no man can wander from it more widely." The lapse of more than half a century has served to bring out the keen accuracy of this early opinion. Then came the Corn-Law period, and his steady development in the direction of financial skill and eloquent presentation of dry details. It cannot be said, however, that, at this period, his oratory equalled that of Disraeli.

The latter, in his attacks upon Peel, reached, perhaps, the loftiest heights of epigrammatic and scornful eloquence. He never afterwards attained quite the same level. Only those who understand Peel's career, in its greatness and its littleness, and who know something of his peculiar character and personality, can fully appreciate the scorching sarcasm of those speeches. When he proclaimed Peel's life to be "one great appropriation clause," and termed the Ministers "political pedlars that bought their party in the cheapest market, and sold us in the dearest," and thus continued amid roars of applause from one-half of the Premier's own party, and amid the keen appreciation of the whole House, it is little wonder, though none the less a great tribute to the power of the speaker, that Peel should have become so intensely indignant as to be hardly restrained from challenging his critic to a duel. These speeches mark an epoch in their way, and constitute the triumph of a type of oratory in which Mr. Gladstone never excelled. His epigrams have, indeed, been very few.

But he was a master in the art of indignant, passionate speech. The first occasion on which he really showed this power was in 1853, when, as already stated, he began to mount the higher rungs of the ladder, and it was Disraeli himself who had the misfortune to feel its effects. The latter, in his Budget speech, had told Sir Charles Wood that petulance was not sarcasm, nor was insolence invective, and had castigated Sir James Graham by stating that he viewed him with regard, but not with respect. This line of attack brought Mr. Gladstone to his feet with a bound, and evoked one of his most effective and fiery speeches. It largely contributed to the defeat of the Government, and the destruction of Disraeli's elaborate Budget. Then followed his curious oratorical duel with Palmerston. In this the latter was generally victorious, because he appealed to national sentiment, and acted upon what his practical common sense told him to be the popular feeling of the day; whilst Gladstone dwelt in the clouds of cosmopolitan theory, and endeavoured to inculcate ideas of international benevolence which were hardly in harmony with the current necessities and convictions of the country. But none the less was his eloquence a growing force. And after 1860, when it came down from the clouds of theory, and rested upon the solid basis of financial facts and legislation, he became what Greville termed "the great man of the day."

Even at this distance in time and space, his Budget oratory is hard to describe or analyze. He over and over again made great masses of figures absolutely fascinating by force of the word-painting which accompanied them, the beautiful voice which presented them, and the brilliant arrangement of his illustrations and argument. He moved and charmed the House of Commons—the most severe and critical audience in the world—and, at the same time, won the admiration of the press and the reading public. He successfully held his own against Disraeli, who had won so great a reputation for caustic, clever criticism. This was Parliamentary oratory of the most remarkable kind. It is an embodiment of the fact that genuine eloquence, like genius, is a gift which cannot be acquired. It must be inherent. Intellect and education are very well as adjuncts, but the great speaker requires what some one has called "the oratorical impulse." He must be enthusiastic and earnestly desirous of convincing others; he must have a living faith and confidence in his own cause.

Mr. Gladstone had this power of intense conviction, coupled with a combative disposition, a splendid constitution and voice, a wonderful memory, and a mind which could adapt itself to the surroundings of the moment. Add to these gifts a marvellous fluency of speech, and it appears evident that he possessed every element of oratorical success. Writing in 1860, Mr. Walter Bagehot declared that:

> "To hardly any man have both the impulses of the political orator been given in so great a measure; the didactic orator is usually felicitous in exposition only; the great debater is, like Fox, only great when stung to reply by the spirit of contention. But Mr. Gladstone is by nature, by vehement, overruling nature, great in both arts; he longs to pour forth his own belief; he cannot rest till he has contradicted every one else. . . . Mr. Gladstone will work, and can speak, and the result is what we see. With a flowing eloquence and a lofty heroism; with an acute intellect and endless knowledge; with courage to conceive large schemes, and a voice which will persuade men to adopt those schemes—it is not singular that Mr. Gladstone is of himself a power in Parliamentary life. He can do there what no one else living can do."

This is interesting as being penned at the beginning of the chief portion of the Liberal leader's career. But there is another side to the eulogy which is and must be given to Mr. Gladstone in this connection. He had the vehement declamation of Fox, he possessed the lucid power of statement which distinguished Pitt and Peel, he had the classical elegance of Canning, and the intense energy of Brougham or O'Connell. Yet he was not as effective a speaker as Palmerston, who in oratorical power could not even be compared with him, and, as in the case of Edmund Burke and John Bright, his orations were more than once injurious, rather than serviceable, to the cause he had at heart. He possessed little sense of wit or humour, and the delicate rapier-like thrusts of Disraeli, or, in later days, of Chamberlain, only produced indignation, or lengthy, argumentative, replies, which would be forgotten where the clever brevity of the attacks would be long remembered. He possessed the natural fault of being too diffuse and elaborate on occasions where shortness and explicit statement were desirable. By-paths of illustration and commentary were apt to draw him aside from the straight path of assertion and proof. And the art of advocacy, in which he so greatly excelled, increased that remarkable tendency to apparent inconsistency, combined with sincere and sympathetic conviction, which has so permeated his career.

But with all deductions made, Mr. Gladstone stands out distinctly as the most varied and gifted orator of the age. Mr. A. Hayward, Q.C., writing in 1872 in the *Quarterly Review*, declared that "the first place among living competitors for the oratorical crown will be conceded without a dissenting voice to Mr. Gladstone. He may lack Mr. Bright's impassive diction, impassive by its simplicity, or Mr. Disraeli's humour and sarcasm, but he has made ten eminently successful speeches to Mr. Bright's or Mr. Disraeli's one. His foot is ever in the stirrup; his lance is ever in the rest. Right or wrong, he is always real, natural, earnest, unaffected, and unforced." As illustrating the curious difference in opinion which may exist upon such subjects, it is interesting to note Mr. Hayward's conclusion that Gladstone was a great debater, but not a great orator.

This statement, however, was made with twenty years of eloquent exertion to come—including such triumphs of oratory as the Midlothian campaigns. The same thing may be said with even greater force of Sir John A. Macdonald's opinion, expressed in 1861 to Sir Edward Watkin, and after the eminent Canadian statesman had listened to one of Mr. Gladstone's important financial speeches: "He is a great rhetorician, but he is not an orator." An illustration of his debating skill occurred in 1874, when Mr. Disraeli, without a moment's notice, suddenly withdrew the chief and greatly disputed portions of his Endowed Schools Amendment Bill. Mr. Gladstone had no time to consult any one or make any preparations, but he jumped to his feet and delivered a speech which was masterly from the Liberal standpoint. Mr. (now Sir) T. Wemyss Reid, a competent critic, though as a Liberal in politics he may naturally be inclined to err in the direction of eulogy, declares in this connection that:

> "As a debater he stands without a rival in the House of Commons. . . . The readiness with which he replies to a speech just delivered is amazing; he will take up one after another the arguments of his opponent, and examine them, and debate them with as much precision and fluency as though he had spent weeks in the preparation of his answer. Then, too, at such moments time is precious, and he is compelled to repress that tendency to prolixity which is one of his greatest faults as an orator. The excitement which prevails round him always infects him strongly; his pale face twitches, his magnificent voice quivers, his body sways from side to side as he pours forth argument, pleading, and invective strangely intermingled. The storm of cheers and counter-cheers rages around him, as it can rage nowhere except in the House of Commons on such an occasion, but high and clear above the tumult rings out his voice like the trumpet sounding through the din of the battlefield."

To his peroration every one listens with intense interest, and it has usually been delivered amidst an equally remarkable silence, in which voice, and accent, and gesture, and beauty of carefully prepared language, combine to produce an artistic and vivid impression. He had, in speaking, a number of peculiarities, of which the most prominent was the proneness to vehement gesticulation. He was emphatic to the point of striking the table with his clenched hand, and frequently struck one hand upon the other, or pointed his finger straight at his opponent as a sort of scornful index to his vigorous attack. But these outward indications of excitement are not new in the annals of oratory. The great Earl of Chatham, with his flashing eye and swaying figure, and even with his crutch in days of physical weakness, used to forcibly emphasize his words. Brougham once dropped on his knees during a debate in the House of Lords, and appealed to his opponents against their contemplated action. Burke, upon one occasion, threw a dagger on the floor, and brought from Sheridan the remark, which roused a roar of laughter, that "the gentleman has brought us the knife, but where is the fork?" Fox was at times moved to tears by his own eloquence, and Sheridan himself is said to have fainted in order to bring home his argument to an obstinate House.

Had it been desirable to do any of these things, none of his predecessors could have excelled Mr. Gladstone in originality of conception, or power of acting. He seems to have been a born actor. In his speaking, he used the histrionic art to an admitted, and very forcible, degree. His face, his eyes, his mouth, his whole body, were made to voice the expression or thought which passed through his mind at the moment. Of course, this was not assumed; it had become a sort of second nature. But, originally, he does not seem to have possessed, or, if possessed, to have used, the faculty. It developed with his oratorical growth, and his enthusiasm in political questions. A critic, in 1874, stated that there was in his voice a slight Lancashire twang. Whether the fact was really noticeable or not, it certainly never affected the silvery clearness of that wonderful organ of speech. It has more than once been described as a silver clarion, and was often compared to a sweet-tongued bell.

Mr. Gladstone's great speeches in Parliament have been many. The Budget speeches between 1860 and 1866; the Reform Bill oration of the latter year; the speeches delivered in presenting the Irish Church Bill, the Irish Land Act, and the Irish University Bill, were all remarkable utterances. In them his qualities were fully exhibited. Mr. Justin McCarthy has tried to analyze these powers by describing the wonderful voice, with its pure, sweet, clear, resonant tones, and that gift of words which so often led him into the fault of too great fluency, and the formation of sentences in which parenthesis followed parenthesis until the listener or reader mistakenly despaired of ever having the meaning made absolutely clear. An opponent, in fact, once summed up one of these great speeches as a "circumgyration of incoherent words."

In this connection it is interesting to note an opinion expressed by Cobden. Gladstone at times had no warmer admirer than he, and there was hardly any one in the Parliament of his day so distinguished for straightforward simplicity of style and manner as the great free-trader. Writing to Mr. W. E. Forster on January 19th, 1865, Cobden says:

> "Gladstone's speeches have the effect on my mind of a beautiful strain of music. I can rarely remember any unqualified expression of opinion on any subject outside his political, economical, and financial statements. I remember, on the occasion when he left Sir Robert Peel's Government on account of the Maynooth grants, and when the House met in unusual numbers to hear his explanation, I sat beside Villiers and Ricardo for an hour listening with real pleasure to his beautiful rhetorical involutions and evolutions, and, at the close, turning to one of my neighbours and exclaiming: 'What a marvellous talent is this! Here have I been listening with pleasure for an hour to his explanation, and I know no more why he left the Government than before he commenced.'"

Such was the feeling of a friend and co-worker at the commencement and the close of what may be termed the first important part of Mr. Gladstone's career. But to return to Mr. McCarthy. He goes on to say that "often this superb exuberant rush of words added indescribable strength to the eloquence of the speaker. In passages of indignant remonstrance or denunciation, when word followed word, and stroke came down upon stroke, with a wealth of resource that seemed inexhaustible, the very fluency and variety of the speaker overwhelmed his audience. Interruption only gave him a new stimulus, and appeared to supply him with fresh resources of argument and illustration. His retorts leaped to his lips." Mr. McCarthy adds that the House of Commons was his best ground, and that he was seen to the greatest advantage in Parliamentary debate. This was written in 1880, just after the remarkable Midlothian series of speeches, and may be placed side by side with Mr. Hayward's already quoted statement in 1872, that Mr. Gladstone was a great orator, but not a great debater.

The fact is, he was both. From his first Budget speech in 1853 to his presentation of the second Home Rule Bill in 1893, he exhibited clearly, constantly, and intensely, his Parliamentary oratory. Nearly all contemporary accounts of these innumerable speeches, in the press, in reviews, and in private correspondence which has since been published, indicate this. His appeals to the people from the platform since those first important appearances in Lancashire, after being defeated at Oxford, voice also the popular power which eloquence gave him. His famous campaign of oratory which commenced on Blackheath in 1876, and ended in Midlothian in 1879 and 1880, prove the statement, if proof were necessary. And this is said without reference to his being right or wrong, successful or unsuccessful, in ultimate aim.

A power which can move great masses of people like a strong wind blowing amongst the leaves of a forest is oratory pure and simple. Mr. G. W. Smalley has, perhaps, given us the most accurate pen-picture of that campaign in Midlothian. He describes the reception at Edinburgh on November 29th,

1879. At the second meeting of the day, the audience in the Exchange was so great, so closely packed together and dense, that from the platform it lost all human character, as it stretched back into the recesses of the great hall. Lord Rosebery's voice, clear and ringing as it was, could only be heard a short distance from where he was standing. Yet when Mr. Gladstone rose, and the applause had ceased, we are told that: "The first note of that marvellous voice rose like the peal of an organ. For the first time he spoke with visible effort; sending his slow syllables and deep tones to the uttermost ends of the building; using his utmost power. He was everywhere heard over the spreading surface of what he so well described as an ocean of human life. It is probably the greatest feat he ever performed. He spoke for about twenty minutes." Upon this occasion, as always, the speaker had beside him on the table that little bottle of yellow fluid about which so much curiosity has been felt, and from which he poured a portion into a tumbler when required. It was, in fact, egg-flip, compounded of eggs and sherry. Mr. Smalley tells us that he has been often asked to compare Mr. Gladstone with some American orator. But he knew of none, either in America or Europe, who was like him. And he had heard Castelar, and Gambetta, and Bismarck; Daniel Webster and Wendell Phillips. He declares that Webster was of the earth, but that Mr. Gladstone "has a light on his face that seems to come from the upper air." Webster was a speaker of extraordinary powers of mind. "He was occasionally an orator. It is but seldom that Mr. Gladstone is not." Throughout this Midlothian campaign, and the later one of 1884, Mr. Smalley seems to have caught something of the enthusiasm with which their hero's eloquence inspired the usually staid and sober Scotchmen. But his descriptions afford very good evidence of the Liberal leader's genuine oratorical faculty.

One of the most remarkable qualities of his speaking, both in the Parliament and on the platform, was an ingenuity which often verged upon casuistry. It was while the Home Rule controversy raged with such intensity in 1886 that James Russell Lowell, then United States Minister in London, made his celebrated epigram upon Mr. Gladstone's changes of opinion:

> "His greatness not so much in genius lies,
> As in adroitness, when occasions rise,
> Life-long convictions to extemporize."

Clever this undoubtedly was, and it delighted many who heard it then and afterwards. It revives the memory of a story told in the early Sixties, when Garibaldi was in London, and had occasionally been seen in the company of a certain rich and titled widow. The suggestion was made that it would be very wise for them to marry, he having a great name and she plenty of money. But some one raised the objection that Garibaldi already had a wife living, when the ready response came: "He must get Gladstone to explain her away." Yet with all Mr. Gladstone's ingenuity of ideas and agility in expression, his speeches have usually left an impression of earnestness, conviction, and enthusiasm upon the hearers, which makes it impossible to view with any sympathy—apart altogether from the knowledge we have of his personal character—these hints, or public accusations, of political insincerity. But Mr. Disraeli had to contend during the most of his life against the same charge, so that it is not one which Conservatives can be blamed for having made.

As the years rolled on, and Mr. Gladstone progressed through the seventh, and into the eighth, decade of his life, it became natural for people to express greater and greater admiration for his speeches. Even critics of the sterner sort fell under the temptation of saying, in regard to fast succeeding orations, that the one just delivered was equal to any in the long series. There have been other veteran orators in modern Britain. Lord Palmerston could deliver an effective speech, and rout the most of his opponents, when eighty years of age. Lord Brougham lost in old age none of his remarkable powers of speech. Lord Lyndhurst delivered a great oration in the House of Lords when verging on his ninetieth year. It is said to have been long and complicated in argument, yet as clear as light in effect, and to have been spoken with a musical and penetrating voice. And, in more recent years, Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Selborne, and the Duke of Argyle, have been distinguished as septuagenarian speakers.

But Mr. Gladstone stood unique amongst them all for the variety, continuity, and vigour of his utterances. Mr. H. W. Lucy describes an impromptu speech in the House on March 3rd, 1892, as being characterized by "thrilling energy, lightning-like brilliancy, and thunderous force." And while this is the admiring note of an admitted partisan, there is much of truth in it. In one respect, the years seem to have told upon him, and this was in the single point in which his three chief Parliamentary opponents since the days of Palmerston—Disraeli, Balfour, and Chamberlain—had maintained a certain advantage over him. It was in the power of self-possession. Nothing could move Disraeli. No Irish taunt, however barbed and bitter, could stir Mr. Balfour. No hostile treatment, and he has had much to face, can disturb Mr. Chamberlain. But the Liberal leader was too apt to exhibit his heart on his sleeve, his feelings upon his face, his anger in his actions. And it was not till he got to his feet, and not always then, that he could entirely control himself.

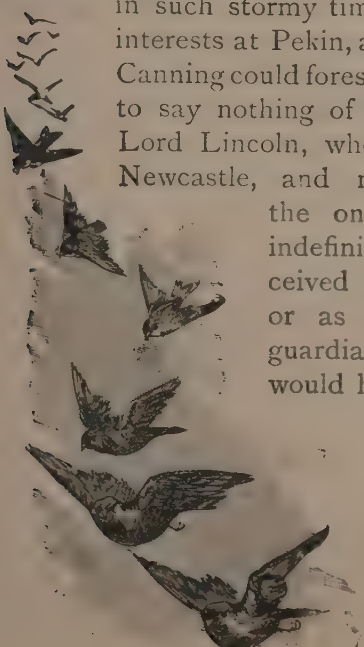
But none the less did Mr. Gladstone possess the true oratorical power, and wield in his long career the influence of an exuberant rhetoric, an overwhelming enthusiasm, a remarkable versatility. History will interpret his policy, his legislation, his system of government, the results of his speeches and advocacy, in various ways, as History is wont to do. But it will agree upon his marvellous gift of oratory, and his power in this respect over both Parliament and the people.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE CONTEMPORARIES OF A GREAT LIFE.

A CAREER like that of Mr. Gladstone presents to the mind a marvellous picture of the past. It resembles a vast panorama upon which move the figures of great men, the shadows of changing policies, and national incidents, and varied achievements. In a life so prolonged, and prominent, and active as his has been, no study of character or policy is complete without a knowledge of his contemporaries—his friends and enemies. The names of many, it is true, have become mere dim shadows in the distance, and those of others have largely lost interest to the succeeding generations. Yet they all contributed to the control of events in which he shared, and helped to influence his complex character, or were, in turn, influenced by him.

It would be more than interesting if one could look into the cloistered halls of Oxford during the early part of the century and see there the youthful figures engaged in study, or conversation, or debate; discern the ambitions faintly flitting through their minds; and then compare those hopes and aspirations with the results attained. It is hardly likely that James Bruce had the slightest conception of the future in which he was to govern Canada in such stormy times and with such signal success; manage British interests at Pekin, and rule countless millions in India; or that Charles Canning could foresee his own elevation to the government of Hindostan, to say nothing of the terrific conflict with rebellion which ensued. Lord Lincoln, when he wrote to his father, the stern old Duke of Newcastle, and recommended his friend, William Gladstone, as the one Tory who was likely to save the country from indefinite revolution and change, could not have conceived himself as member of a future Liberal Cabinet, or as travelling in Canada, then almost unknown, as guardian to a Prince of Wales, then unborn. And it would have been fully as difficult for Cardinal Manning or Lord Selborne, Lord Sherbrooke or Archbishop Tait, Lord Herbert of Lea or Sir George Cornewall Lewis, to have anticipated their varied and distinguished careers, as for young Gladstone, with his strong ecclesiastical prepossessions, to have looked into his great political future. Meanwhile they:



"Held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and art
And labour, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land."

Then appear the first glimpses of the Parliamentary picture. When he entered upon that career—described by Macaulay as one in which "the most its combatants can expect is that by relinquishing liberal studies and social comfort, by passing nights without sleep and summers without one glimpse of the beauties of nature, they may obtain that laborious, that invidious, that closely-watched slavery, which is mocked with the name of power"—Earl Grey was Premier, and the historic government which had carried the Reform Bill was still in power. The very names of its members illustrate the crowded years which have passed since then, and the personal connections involved in sixty years of political struggle. Lord Brougham was Lord Chancellor—for a period the meteor had been chained. In the early years of the century, he had, as a rising barrister, been the guest of Mr. John Gladstone in Liverpool, and a little later the youthful son of his host had seen him take part in a memorable election contest. In 1868 the boy of that day delivered the chief eulogy in the House of Commons over the stormy life which had just closed, and the portentous energies which he declared to have been "wonderfully and beautifully softened" by the hand of time.

Lord Althorp (Earl Spencer) was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his successor in the title, many years after, was to help Mr. Gladstone very greatly in his Irish policy. Lord Palmerston was Foreign Secretary; Lord Melbourne had not yet reached the Premiership, and, in the meantime, made a very debonair and careless Home Secretary; Lord Lansdowne was in the Cabinet, and the son who was to become Governor-General of Canada had not been born; Lord Durham was there also; as was the predecessor of the present Lord Ripon, and the first of three more or less eminent Earls of Derby, whose rise and progress, and death or retirement, Mr. Gladstone has since witnessed. It is in connection with this Peer, an orator who was unexcelled, in his day, for qualities of force and vigour, that a characteristic story is told of Lord Lyndhurst—himself a splendid speaker. When asked who the greatest orator in England was, he would reply that "Lord Derby, no doubt, is the second," implying always that he himself stood first.

During the ten years following 1830, Mr. Gladstone saw the commencement of many great literary careers. Dickens and Lytton, Tennyson and Browning, Marryat and Carlyle, began to make their mark in that period. Douglas Jerrold and Thomas Hood, Sir A. Allison, G. P. R. James and William Wordsworth, Theodore Hook and Harrison Ainsworth, were the established

lished lights of the day. Byron was not long dead. Scott, Coleridge, Moore, Mrs. Hemans, and Campbell, passed during this decade from the scene of their work and fame. Then came other generations and other periods. George Eliot, Reade, Lever, Trollope, Kingsley, Freeman, Froude, Green, Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall, passed across the stage and vanished. Macaulay rose, and flourished, and died; essayists like Mathew Arnold adorned literature and passed away; new and successive schools of fiction have come and gone, until Mr. Gladstone, who, in 1840, might read Dickens and Thackeray, in 1895 reviews Mrs. Humphrey Ward's latest novel, or, perhaps, turns the pages of Rider Haggard, Thomas Hardy, Conan Doyle, R. L. Stevenson, William Black, or Stanley Weyman. Meantime, in Europe, in America, and in the Empire generally, leaders have struggled to the top in politics, statecraft, literature, art, and science; performed their part, and received their reward; until memory must have seemed to him in his later days almost a procession of brilliant phantoms—recalling, perhaps, those lines of Goldsmith:

> "Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
> I see the lords of human kind pass by."

Amid this stream of successive leaders in thought or work, a few interesting reminiscences may be noted. When Mr. Gladstone held the post of President of the Board of Trade in Peel's Ministry (1843), he had with him as Private Secretary a young man who afterwards became leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons. Sir Stafford Northcote was one of the most kindly, gentle figures in English politics, and began his career with an admiration for Mr. Gladstone which he retained all through life, and amid the stormiest controversies of Parliamentary struggle. In 1842, he wrote a private letter which is interesting reading in these later years:

> "There is but one statesman of the present day in whom I feel entire confidence, and with whom I cordially agree, and that statesman is Mr. Gladstone. I look upon him as the representative of the party, scarcely developed as yet, though secretly forming and strengthening, which will stand by all that is dear and sacred, in my estimation, in the struggle which I believe will come ere very long between good and evil, order and disorder, the Church and the world, and I see a very small band collecting round him, and ready to fight manfully under his leading."

Twenty years later, after further political experience, and at a time when the two men had clearly parted company, Sir Stafford published a work entitled "Twenty Years of Financial Policy," in which he pays the highest tribute to Mr. Gladstone's "consummate skill" of oratorical arrangement and presentation; his persuasive reasoning, boldness of conception, and power of producing effect. "We may well believe," he adds, in referring to the Budget of 1853, "that nothing less than a striking scheme like that which Mr. Gladstone brought forward would, at that time, have sufficed to save the finances from the most serious confusion." In subsequent years, he found himself, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in strong opposition to Mr. Gladstone, but their personal friendship seems to have never varied. And when he died, shortly after retiring from the Commons and becoming Earl of Iddesleigh, the remarks of his early pastor and master in the art of politics were exceedingly appropriate, and even touching.

Speaking in the House—January 27th, 1887—Mr. Gladstone referred to his introduction of Lord Iddesleigh into public affairs, his personal services to himself at that time, and the rich and abundant promise of his early life. "It was known," he went on, "that the country had lost a man of very large experience, of great accumulated knowledge, of remarkable power, and accustomed to apply it to render public service to the country. But even that, I think, and the sense of the loss of such a man as I have described, by no means account for the deep feeling that has existed for Lord Iddesleigh. For there was a sentiment that we had lost, not only that knowledge and that experience and that ability, which are not quite rare in this country, but that we had lost manly qualities not easily to be replaced." Such a tribute—the kindliness and accuracy of which was widely recognized—fittingly closed a record of friendly relationship which does credit to English politics.

A very different type of man was Samuel Wilberforce. Perhaps the great Bishop was Mr. Gladstone's closest personal friend. They corresponded constantly, and visited each other throughout life, as often as work and engagements would permit. The Bishop's letters throw much light upon many phases of his friend's career and character. He was a warm political admirer, an early mentor in the path to greatness, a friend in times of need, such as often occurred in matters ecclesiastical, and a Liberal to the backbone, as well as a wonderfully able preacher and Bishop. It is well known that had Gladstone come into power a few weeks earlier in 1868, Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford, and not Bishop Tait of London, would have been consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of England. His diary affords a vivid succession of personal pictures in connection with Mr. Gladstone's life, and his letters are equally important. One interesting reference may be given. Writing to his son on December 12th, 1868, he says:

> "I have very much enjoyed meeting Gladstone. He is so delightfully true and the same; just as full of interest in every good thing of every kind. . . . When people talk of Gladstone going mad, they do not take into account the wonderful elasticity of his mind and the variety of his interests. Now, this morning (I am writing in the train on my way to London), after breakfast, he and Salisbury and I and Cardwell had a walk round this beautiful park (Hawarden), and he was just as much interested in the size of the oaks, their probable age, etc., as if no cares of State ever pressed upon him."

Up to the time of the Bishop's death, in 1873—which resulted from an accident while riding with Earl Granville to meet Mr. Gladstone at a country house in Surrey—this friendship remained close, beyond ordinary connections of the kind. An eye-witness of the scene describes the living statesman as standing in an attitude and with a face of the profoundest melancholy, while the coroner's jury were in the room where the body of his dead friend had been laid out, clad in its full canonicals. One was as motionless as the other, and Mr. Gladstone seemed so immovable that he might almost have been a statue. It was an unusual way for him to show emotion, and probably indicated, for that very reason, its depth and strength. In the House of Commons he referred to the event in terms of eloquent and deep feeling. "I desire," he said, "to avoid using the language of exaggeration, but there is no word adequate to describe the incessant, the unflagging, labours, of this Bishop throughout the twenty-eight years for which, as his epitaph, with noble simplicity, records, he was a Bishop of the Church of God. . . . I say that he was the Bishop, not of a particular Church, not of a particular diocese, but of the nation to which he belonged."

With Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton—the wit, *litterateur*, poet, politician, and ever-delightful companion—Mr. Gladstone was on terms of long and friendly intimacy. As far back as 1843, Milnes wrote to him asking advice, and saying that he was tired of politics, and thought seriously of leaving Parliament and trying diplomacy—if his friends would get him a berth in the service. Mr. Gladstone, in reply, declared himself "so little acquainted with either our foreign policy or with diplomatic life" that he did not think his opinion would be of much value. But, upon the whole, he thought that success was probable in the line then being pursued. The hint was taken, and Milnes remained in the House, where, during the succeeding year, he advocated Mr. Disraeli's "Young England" idea, and joined that aspiring leader in his effort to regenerate the country by weaving the interests of aristocracy and democracy into what his follower, Tennyson, might, in long after years, have called "one harmonious whole."

Mr. Gladstone did not appreciate this school any more than he did its founder, and, if his advice had been asked, it would, perhaps, have been a cautious echo of the protest entered by the Duke of Rutland against the association of his son, Lord John Manners, with Mr. Disraeli. Writing to Lord Strangford, on September 6th, 1844, the Duke observed: "I lament, as much as you can do, the influence which Mr. Disraeli has acquired over several young British senators, and over your son and mine especially. I do not know Mr. Disraeli personally, but I have respect only for his talents, which I think he sadly misuses. The admirable character of our sons only makes them the more assailable by the arts of a designing person." The mingled contempt and *hauteur* of this note indicates slightly the obstacles which Lord Beaconsfield had to encounter before he became the champion of the agricultural interest and the ultimate idol of the aristocratic world.

For the time being, Monckton Milnes was not moved by any such protests —if they were offered, in his case—but eventually he drifted into Liberalism again, and, in after days, was made a Peer through Mr. Gladstone's instrumentality. The latter he frequently visited, and often corresponded with. Writing him, on December 31st, 1872, he proffered every good wish for the coming year, both public and private, but added, with much frankness, that he would be "thankful if it constructed something. As we get older, destruction becomes less agreeable." In a letter to a friend, in May, 1877, he observes:

> "I have just been breakfasting with Gladstone. We talked no politics, mainly Walter Scott and other novel subjects; but he made it very agreeable. He said he had been in a hurry for forty years, which must account for many of his shortcomings."

The career of John Bright is one with which Mr. Gladstone has been closely bound up. The great free-trade orator rose upon the fiscal reform tide, and his pure, clear, English eloquence adorns a period during which the future Prime Minister had also won himself a more than considerable reputation. Bright, in his origin, was connected with trade, was trained amongst Quakers, was a dissenter of the dissenters, a hater of privilege, and a Radical from his birth. Mr. Gladstone was the reverse of all this, in origin and early environment, and commenced life as the keenest of Tories, and a man of books rather than of battles. They came together first in the anti-Corn Law fight. Upon the Crimean war they fell apart, and in regard to that subject never agreed. During the Reform struggles they fought side by side, and Bright made many eloquent speeches for the Liberal policy, and against the Disraelian settlement. In the first Gladstone Ministry he held a place, and, although the ideas of the two leaders regarding the Manchester School did not harmonize, their friendship remained close. In the second Administration—1880—the great Quaker once more held office, but it was a brief tenure. He could not stand the Egyptian war, and resigned immediately after the bombardment of Alexandria. Mr. G. W. Smalley has written a graphic pen-picture of Mr. Bright's feelings upon this occasion—his hatred of war, his love for his leader. To him he said:

> "I have spoken to nobody as I speak to you. Of course, I have protested. I have argued, entreated, remonstrated, all in vain. I believe I threatened. It was equally vain. I appealed to Gladstone. He listened, but I could not move him. I do not censure him; not a word of what I say about the war is meant for censure on Gladstone. There is no purer soul than his. He believes himself right. Nothing would induce him to fire a shot if he did not. But I must judge for myself. I could not sleep for the roar of those English guns at Alexandria. It is the end of my public life. My work is done."

To a certain extent the prophecy was correct. He never held office again, and in 1885 there came the final break over the Home Rule question. It is beyond doubt that Mr. Bright's secession did that cause grave injury in England, and although he would not oppose his old friend and leader upon the platform, or attack him in Parliament, he considered it a duty which he owed the State to give reasons for his position in several public letters. And these did Mr. Gladstone much harm in many old-fashioned Liberal quarters, where Bright's name and fame remained a power. But when, in 1889, the curtain of life was drawn down upon the sturdy orator who had been so intensely English as to verge upon narrowness, the twilight of a London afternoon showed serried masses of Parliamentary mourners listening as Mr. Gladstone once more did full justice to a remarkable man, and credit to his own powers of discriminating eulogy.

Thomas Carlyle and Lord Tennyson were two great men of vastly diverse natures with whom Mr. Gladstone had some intercourse. It was not very close, nor was it always cordial. Carlyle liked no one, unless it was Bismarck, whom he had once styled "God's vicegerent on earth," and he hated politicians on principle. In his Journal, under date of January 23rd, 1867, and headed Mentone, he writes: "Gladstone, *en route* homewards, called on Monday. Talk copious, ingenious, but of no worth or sincerity—pictures, literature, finance, prosperities, greatness of outlook for Italy, etc.—a man ponderous, copious, of evident faculty, but all gone irrecoverably into House-of-Commons shape." His letters to his sister contain the most bitter and caustic denunciations of Gladstone and Disraeli, somewhat modified as regards the latter after his offer of the Grand Cross of the Bath and a pension from the Queen. Though too independent to accept anything of the kind, even Carlyle did not prove averse to the compliment thus conveyed.

With Tennyson it was different. The poet and the statesman were born in the same year, and attended university at about the same time, one at Cambridge, the other at Oxford. In the early "thirties" they both began to acquire reputation, and moved in a circle of society where Carlyle, Disraeli, Mill, Thackeray, Bulwer Lytton, and Monckton Milnes were more or less known. The one was made Poet Laureate shortly before the other became Chancellor of the Exchequer. But Tennyson always remained a Conservative, while Gladstone gradually, but steadily, changed his views. And although this did not affect their friendly relationship, it brought them upon more than one occasion into sharp political antagonism. None the less, the poet accepted a Peerage upon Mr. Gladstone's recommendation, after refusing a Baronetcy through Mr. Disraeli, and, in 1883, accompanied the Premier and Mrs. Gladstone on a cruise to Copenhagen and other points. It was upon this occasion, or rather after their return, that the two distinguished friends were presented with the freedom of Kirkwall, and Mr. Gladstone delivered a brief speech, which is interesting from a personal standpoint, and as being a sort of postscript to his famous *Quarterly Review* article of 1859:

> "Mr. Tennyson's life and labours correspond, in point of time, as nearly as possible to my own, but Mr. Tennyson's exertions have been on a higher level of human action than my own. He has worked in a higher field, and his work will be more durable. We public men—who play a part which places us much in view of our countrymen—we are subject to the danger of being momentarily intoxicated by the kindness, the undue homage of kindness, we may receive. It is our business to speak, but the words which we speak have wings, and fly away and disappear. The work of Mr. Tennyson is of a higher order. I anticipate for him that immortality to which England and Scotland have supplied in their long national life many claims. . . . The Poet Laureate has written his own song on the hearts of his countrymen that can never die. Time is powerless against him."

In 1872, one of the strongest men in the Gladstone Government was Mr. W. E. Forster. He was not yet a member of the Cabinet, but he had done Liberalism a great service by the masterly way in which he had guided the Education Act of 1870 through the House of Commons. Staunch to what seemed to him the true principles of progress, he was at the same time so evidently honest in conviction, and independent in character, as to command the respect of opponents as well as of party supporters. Many regarded him as the most rising man in the Liberal ranks, and few hesitated to place him with Mr. Bright and Mr. Lowe as a possible leader of the party, should the Premier at any time sheath his sword and retire from active service. His rugged, natural simplicity of style, and vigour and force of language, were as remarkable in their way as his courage and determination. But, in 1875, Lord Hartington succeeded Mr. Gladstone as the Liberal chief, and in half a dozen years from that date Mr. Forster had shattered his political ship upon the rock of Irish affairs.

When the Government of 1880-85 was formed, he had taken the Irish Secretaryship, partly from a sense of duty, partly from loyalty to his leader. What followed belongs to the history of coercion in Ireland, and has been vigorously used against Mr. Gladstone by political opponents. It was, in truth, the last organized Liberal effort at "strong government" in Ireland, and Mr. Forster was the victim of a more than difficult situation. He had been given every possible power, and when outrages continued to increase, and the rule of the National League to grow more and more visible, he used that power to the utmost extent. On November 1st, 1881, Mr. Gladstone wrote him a congratulatory note: "It is not," he said, "every man who, in difficult circumstances, can keep a cool head with a warm heart; and this is what you are doing."

But Forster was sensitive as to his success, and anxious to retire if the Government could get some one else to take hold of Ireland with any better effect. And, judging from the correspondence of the period, there must have been a good deal of friction in the Cabinet as to the proper policy to be pursued; especially during and after the arrest of Parnell and his friends, and their confinement in Kilmainham jail. He had, however, triumphed over these obstacles, and on April 5th, 1882, Mr. Gladstone again wrote: "I do not admit your failure, and I think you have admitted it rather too much—at any rate by omission; by not putting forward enough the fact that, in the main point, namely, the deadly fight with social revolution; you have not failed, but are succeeding." Then came the Government's decision to try another line of action, and the sudden liberation of Parnell and his associates. The exact nature and cause of the change of policy is not clearly known, but it was plainly in antagonism to all Forster's ideas, and necessitated his prompt resignation—May 1st, 1882. Sir T. Wemyss Reid, from whose "Life of Mr. Forster" the above correspondence has been quoted, speaks plainly of this result, and the relationship between the Premier and his colleague:

> "From Mr. Gladstone especially, he parted with profound sorrow. There had, from time to time, been differences between them during their official connection, but up to the last moment they had been differences on questions of detail, not of principle; whilst during those terrible months in which Forster had been waging war against the outrage-mongers in Ireland, under a flank fire from English Conservatives and English Radicals, he had received a constant, and a loyal, and generous support from his chief."

Then followed the sadly terminated mission of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the failure of the first olive branch held out, and a temporary renewal of coercive efforts. But so far as Mr. Gladstone was concerned, this was the beginning of the era of attempted conciliation. For Mr. Forster it was, in reality, an extension of life. The plots discovered during the Phœnix Park investigations show that he could hardly have escaped much longer the fate which met his mild and kindly successor. When he died, in 1886, and during the discussion of the Home Rule policy which he so keenly hated, Mr. Gladstone's eulogy in the Commons summed up his strong and rugged personality: "He was a man upon whom there can be no doubt that nature had laid her hand for the purpose of forming a thoroughly genuine and independent character."

During the American Civil War, a young English aristocrat distinguished himself upon one occasion by wearing a Confederate flag in his buttonhole at a New York entertainment. He had, at that time, been a member of the British House of Commons for only a few years, and was known to be fond of horses and theatres; was considered a poor speaker; and seemed rather disposed to look upon politics as a bore. Yet, ten years later, he was chosen over the heads of Forster, Lowe, Childers, and Harcourt, as Mr. Gladstone's successor in the Liberal leadership. The Marquess of Hartington was, in fact, what may be termed an hereditary statesman. As the son of a great Whig duke, he had been given office at an early age, and put through grade after grade, as a matter of course, rather than from the exhibition of any striking ability.

Yet he possessed great ability, and of that sound, sterling, trustworthy type which may so often be found amongst English leaders. Patience and determination made him eventually a good speaker; a sense of duty to his station, rather than personal ambition, induced him to devote the time to politics which he might have preferred to give to pleasure; character and sound principle brought him a high personal reputation; hard work made him a good administrator. In Mr. Gladstone's first Government, he became Postmaster-General, and, two years later (1870), Secretary of State for Ireland. His manner, however, was a mixture of aristocratic languidness and *hauteur*, and was certainly not of the sort to produce popularity. But, in 1875, he was given an opportunity to show his real qualities, and it is generally admitted that during the five stormy years that followed he made an able and cautious leader, in a succession of exceedingly difficult circumstances. He and the Liberal party were warned beforehand that no man could be its real leader so long as Mr. Gladstone was in the House of Commons. The *Spectator*, for instance, declared that "Mr. Gladstone in the House so dwarfs every other Liberal, the sound of his voice so terrifies every other orator, the words of his counsel so outweigh the advice of any other Ulysses, that leadership may be an impossibility, or a humiliation."

Naturally, the two were not always in sympathy during this period, but Lord Hartington succeeded in winning general respect—while Mr. Gladstone was winning the future victory. When the elections of 1880 were over, the former was, of course, given an opportunity to attempt the formation of a Government, but he promptly declined in favour of his old leader. In the new Administration, he was, for a time, Secretary for India, and then for War. He refused altogether to join the Government of 1886, because of the whispered probabilities of Home Rule, and since then he has been as consistent, though moderate, an opponent of Mr. Gladstone as he was previously a firm friend and follower. And the former Liberal leader has lived to sit as Duke of Devonshire in what is practically a Conservative Government.

Mr. Chamberlain was a very different type of man. Aggressive, caustic, and brilliantly clever, he entered Parliament and politics in 1874 as the representative of virile Radicalism, and of a city and district which voiced the fieriest phases of that school of thought. He has since then exercised a peculiar, but powerful, influence upon Mr. Gladstone's career. Intimate friends they do not seem to have ever been. When the Radicals won such a prominent place in the elections of 1880, Mr. Chamberlain would probably have been entirely passed over had not Sir Charles Dilke stood by him, and declined to accept the Under-Secretaryship of the Foreign Affairs Department unless his Radical colleague were included in the Cabinet. And so he became President of the Board of Trade and a party leader, without having ever held a minor office. No two men could be more unlike than he and Mr. Gladstone. The one was cool, keen, unemotional, epigrammatic, and sarcastic; the other, for many years past, has been intensely emotional, impetuous, energetic, and copious in language. When the Home Rule Government was formed, Mr. Chamberlain consented to take office on the understanding that there was to be ample inquiry into the subject, and that his freedom of action and opinion should not be affected. In order to avoid any future mistake upon the point, he asked permission to place his views in writing, and therefore penned a letter, dated January 30th, 1886, which has become famous, not only in connection with his own subsequent resignation, but as embodying some of the opinions which afterwards became known as Liberal-Unionist. In view of its historic interest, it may be given here:

"My Dear Mr. Gladstone:

"I have availed myself of the opportunity you have kindly afforded me to consider further your offer of a seat in your Government. I recognize the justice of your view that the question of Ireland is paramount to all others, and must first engage your attention. The statement of your intention to examine whether it is practicable to comply with the wishes of the majority of the Irish people, as testified by the return of eighty-five representatives of the Nationalist party, does not go beyond your previous public declarations, while the conditions which you attach to the possibility of such compliance seem to me adequate, and are also in accordance with your repeated public utterances. But I have already thought it due to you to say that, according to my present judgment, it will not be found possible to reconcile those conditions with the establishment of a national legislative body sitting in Dublin, and I have explained my own preference for an attempt to come to terms with the Irish members on the basis of a more limited scheme of local government, coupled with proposals for a settlement of the land, and, perhaps, also of the education question. You have been kind enough, after hearing these opinions, to repeat your request that I should join your Government, and you have explained that in this case I shall retain 'unlimited liberty of judgment and rejection' on any scheme that may hereafter be proposed, and that the full consideration of such minor proposals as I have referred to as an alternative to any larger arrangement will not be excluded by you. On the other hand, I have no difficulty in assuring you of my readiness to give an unprejudiced examination to any more extensive proposals that may be made, with an anxious desire that the results may be more favourable than I am at present able to anticipate. In the circumstances, and with the most earnest hope that I may be able in any way to assist you in your most difficult work, I beg to accept the offer you have made to submit my name to Her Majesty for a post in the new Government.

"I am, my dear Mr. Gladstone,
"Yours sincerely,
"J. Chamberlain."

This important letter exhibits every desire to consider the matter fairly, and brings into view one of Mr. Gladstone's marked characteristics in later days. His masterful disposition—natural as the result of age and prolonged experience—led him to defer the consultation which Mr. Chamberlain expected, and to apparently assume that the whole Cabinet would accept his vast proposals without special opposition or criticism. The member for Birmingham certainly would not do so, and promptly resigned. Since then, his antagonism to that particular scheme has developed into a keen and powerful opposition to any form of Home Rule. And he has not only carried his native city with him from Radicalism to something very much akin to Conservatism, but has become the political master of the great Midland district. Mr. Chamberlain, in some of his qualities, has been compared to Disraeli, and certainly his epigrammatic description of Lord Rosebery's policy in 1894 has in it the true ring of Vivian Grey: "They have only got to disestablish two Churches, establish three new Parliaments, abolish one House of Legislature, and then they will be ready for business." Had he stood by Mr. Gladstone, he would have probably succeeded him in the Liberal leadership; as it is, he was one of the chief instruments in wrecking Home Rule, and in bringing the Conservative party into a position of unique triumph.

In tracing the formation or development of character in a man who has held a great place before the world, the opinions of contemporaries are not only valuable, but interesting. It is for this reason that the Greville Memoirs are so important to the historian and biographer. The incidents described or views expressed may often be petty, or mean, or mistaken, but yet, in the main, they serve as a sort of flash-light picture of society and its leaders during memorable periods and great events. Mr. Gladstone's relationship with the public men of England might be similarly considered to an almost unlimited extent, and would throw open a vast field of comment and opinion. The events of his life, however, must be allowed to speak for most of the leaders of his time, and only a few further references may be permitted here, and merely as they illustrate certain personal characteristics and occurrences.

And the first and foremost quality in Mr. Gladstone's personality was his religious sympathy. Much has been already said of this, and much more might be said. It affected his politics, and for a while threatened to seriously injure the public career which was at first sought rather because of his father's persuasions than from his own inclinations. It influenced his style of speaking, and Cobden in 1843, at a meeting of the Anti-Corn Law League, pictured the then President of the Board of Trade as "calling up a solemn, earnest, pious expression." A dozen years afterwards, and in the course of debate, Disraeli sneered at his "sanctimonious rhetoric," and Lytton at his "Christian spirit that moved them all." In 1844, Lord Malmesbury refers in his diary to first meeting Mr. Gladstone, and being "disappointed at his appearance, which is that of a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic."

His clerical friends, however, were enthusiastic admirers, and stood by him when the rest of the Conservative party was hopelessly estranged. Men as opposite as the poles in personal feelings and ecclesiastical divisions supported him during his last contest at Oxford. Dr. Pusey and Bishop Wilberforce, Cardinal Manning and Mr. Spurgeon, Bishop Wordsworth and Dr. R. W. Dale, were all friends or followers at one time or another. The Rev. John Keble, during the attacks made upon him in 1855 for resigning from the Palmerston Government, wrote to a friend: "I cannot tell you how grieved I am at the injustice which seems to me in progress towards the only trustworthy statesman of the time." The Rev. F. D. Maurice, writing on August 24th, 1867, to his son, said: "I am glad you have seen Gladstone, and have been able to judge a little of what his face indicates. It is a very expressive one; hard-worked, as you say, and not, perhaps, specially happy; more indicative of struggle than of victory."

Some of Mr. Gladstone's friendships have been famous. That with Lord Aberdeen is known to the world. His admiration for Peel has influenced history; his friendship for Hope-Scott only fell short of influencing his own religion; his appreciation of young Arthur Hallam was very great; his close relations with Sidney Herbert and Sir James Graham affected for a time the condition of parties; his regard for Lord Lincoln, afterwards Duke of Newcastle, was deep and lasting. In a letter written to Hope-Scott shortly after the brilliant lawyer's conversion to the Roman Catholic faith (1851), Mr. Gladstone earnestly urges that nothing should be allowed to come between them, and uses language which not only illustrates his capacity for friendship, but his love for religion:

> "Why should I be estranged from you? I honour you even in what I think your error; why, then, should my feelings to you alter in anything else? It seems to me as though, in these fearful times, events were more and more growing too large for our puny grasp, and that we should the more look for and trust the Divine purpose in them, when we find they have passed wholly beyond the reach and measure of our own. 'The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silent before Him.' The very afflictions of the present time are a sign of joy to follow. 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,' is still our prayer in common; the same prayer, in the same sense; and a prayer which absorbs every other. That is for the future; for the present, we have to endure, to trust, and to pray that each day may bring its strength with its burden, and its lamp for its gloom."

But if Mr. Gladstone had close friendships, he also had strong animosities. The cases were not numerous, but in those of Palmerston and Disraeli they became historic. It was not that in either instance he hated his antagonists; it was simply the utter difference in sentiment, feelings, and policy which existed between them as individuals. He might serve with and under Palmerston; he might act for a time in the same party with Disraeli, and at a later period help him in an independent way. But none the less the antagonism of strong natures made real harmony impossible.

Outside of these cases, however, his personal disposition towards opponents was friendly, and towards supporters kindly, though somewhat masterful. Mathew Arnold, in one of his delightful essays, says that "if one could be astonished at anything in political partisans, I should be astonished at the insensibility of his opponents to the charm of Mr. Gladstone. I think him an unsuccessful, a dangerous Minister, but he is a captivating, a fascinating personality." His kindliness was illustrated in the offer of the Garter, in November, 1869, to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, when that distinguished diplomatist had passed beyond the period at which he could make any political return, even had his views permitted. And that important Order of Knighthood is one greatly prized by the noblemen privileged to possess it. In writing him, the Premier observed: "Two Garters are now available. After your long career of distinguished public service, allow me to place one of them at your disposal. It is scarcely necessary, I should add, that much as the Government might feel the honour and advantage of your support, this note is written neither with the expectation nor with the desire, to modify your position of perfect political independence."

With foreign leaders and statesmen Mr. Gladstone did not come into very close personal contact. Unlike Russell and Palmerston, Salisbury and Rosebery, he was never Foreign Secretary; unlike Beaconsfield, he never took any great interest in ordinary diplomatic and international affairs, or shared in important European conferences. When his love for freedom, or hatred of cruelty, the influence of inherited difficulties or public contingencies, led him to urge or undertake interference in the concerns of other countries, it was either done in a private capacity, or else through the heads of the Foreign Office. The single exception was in the Ionian Islands' case. Prince Bismarck is known to have greatly admired Beaconsfield, and seems to have almost equally disliked Gladstone. Mr. Charles Lowe, in his elaborate biography of the great Chancellor, gives as the chief reason for this feeling the belief that Mr. Gladstone's Government, from 1880 onwards, was weak and uncertain in its foreign policy. This the Prince could not understand, or forgive, and in the Reichstag, on March 2nd, 1885, publicly accused the English Ministry of having constantly asked him for "advice or hints" in regard to Egypt. Nor could he appreciate such an action as Mr. Gladstone's apology to Austria for his Midlothian speeches. On the other hand, we are told by Mr. Charles Marvin that General Ignatieff, the distinguished Russian officer, once pointed out to him a portrait of Gladstone on his walls in St. Petersburg, saying: "I admire him very much. It is the only portrait of a foreign statesman that decorates my room."

One who was not a foreigner, though his home was at the other end of the world—Sir Henry Parkes, of Australia—entertained a warm admiration for the veteran Englishman. Upon one occasion, he wrote to him regarding the relations existing between New South Wales and the Mother Country, and received a reply, in the course of which Mr. Gladstone said: "I beg to express the pleasure with which I learn that, while we are locally separated by so vast a distance, we are, nevertheless, united by sympathy as attached subjects of the British Crown." Later, in March, 1882, Sir Henry met the Imperial Premier at Lord Sherbrooke's house in London, and has since said that he vividly recollects his animated enquiry as to whether many of the young men in Australia entered the Church. During another conversation, the Australian leader told Mr. Gladstone that he had often been charged in Australia with being indifferent, if not inimical, to the preservation of the connection between the Colonies and England, and adds: "He was visibly surprised at what I told him, and said I was authorized to state that he had never, at any time, favoured any such view."

But the majority of these men have passed away. With them, as with a myriad of other leaders in the varied walks of life,

"The long bright day is done,
And darkness rises from the fallen sun."

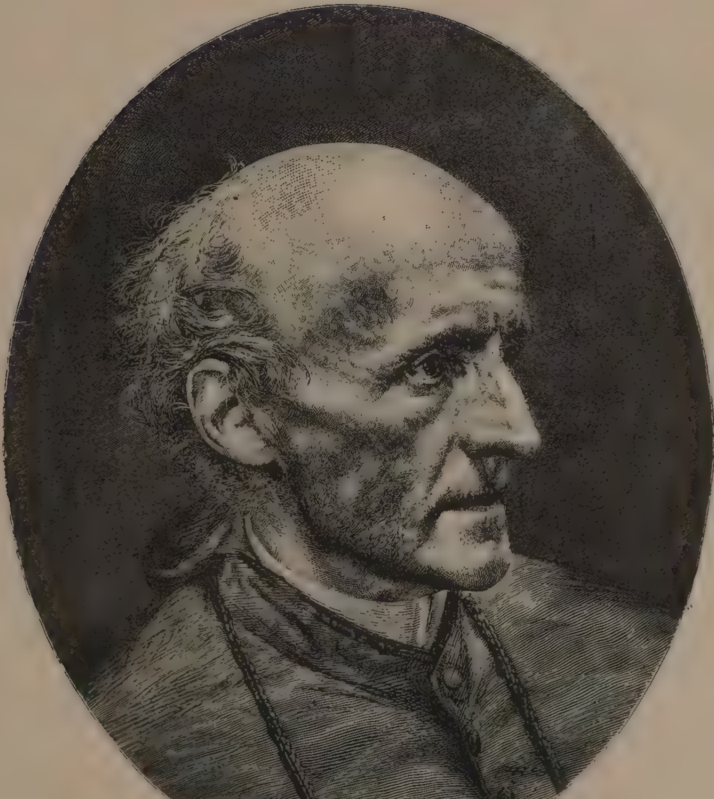
Mr. Gladstone outlived them in length of days, as he has excelled the most of them in vigour, in activity, in versatility. He has seen generations of men, and generations of politicians. Since he entered upon public life, Russia has had three Emperors, has emancipated its slaves, and fought two great wars. France has been a kingdom, a republic, and an empire. He has seen the fortunes of Louis Philippe and the Emperor Napoleon III., of Marshal McMahon and President Thiers, of President Grevy and President Carnot, rise and fall. During that period the United States has developed into a great power, and crushed a gigantic rebellion, while the figures of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, of Lincoln and Grant, of Blaine and Garfield, have passed across its national stage. British India has doubled and trebled in size and population in these years, and has experienced the eloquent eccentricities of Lord Ellenborough, the progressive annexations of Lord Dalhousie, the clement and able government of Lord Canning, the successive administrations of Elgin and Lawrence, of Mayo and Northbrook, of Lytton and Dufferin, of Lansdowne and another Lord Elgin.

Meantime, the Cape of Good Hope has become British, and, through much trouble and many struggles, has risen from a bitter beginning into the great ending which the genius of Cecil Rhodes proposes to create in the immediate present. Canada, from the feeble infancy into which Lord Durham tried to infuse some of the vitality of freedom, and Sir John Macdonald something of the principle of unity, has become the great Dominion of the days of Lord Dufferin and Alexander Mackenzie, of Lord Aberdeen and Sir Mackenzie Bowell. And so, all over the world, rulers have come and gone, statesmen have flourished and faded, empires have sprung up or been destroyed, while Mr. Gladstone has remained a central figure in the government and personal annals of Great Britain.

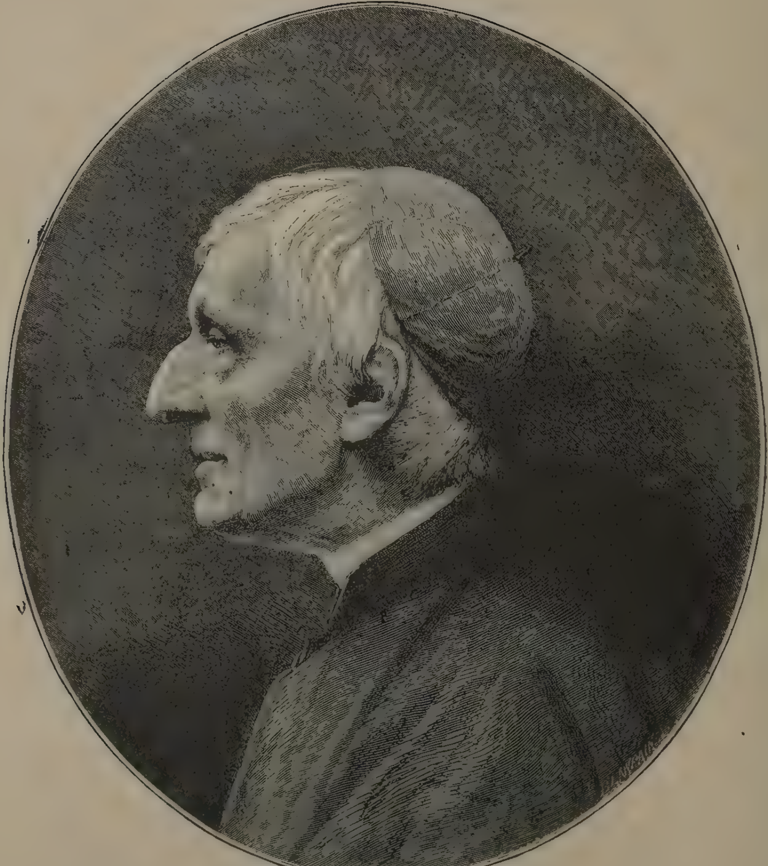
It goes without saying that he has been the subject of intense indignation, and of warmest eulogiums from many and varied contemporaries. Perhaps the best of all the eulogies he has received in the latter part of this prolonged period, is contained in the following striking extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham, during June, 1885:

> "I sometimes think that great men are like great mountains, and that we do not appreciate their magnitude while we are still close to them. You have to go to a distance to see which peak it is that towers above its fellows; and it may be that we shall have to put between us and Mr. Gladstone a space of time before we shall know how much greater he has been than any of his competitors for fame and power. I am certain that justice will be done him in the future, and I am not less certain that there will be a signal condemnation of the men who have not hesitated to load with insult and indignity the greatest statesman of our time."

And Mr. Chamberlain's interesting tribute to his veteran chief will probably be remembered after the causes which so vitally separated the two leaders have passed into the hazy borderlands of history. It may well be left to conclude this sketch of contemporary characters and incidents.



HENRY EDWARD, CARDINAL MANNING.



JOHN HENRY, CARDINAL NEWMAN.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

MR. GLADSTONE'S career has been instinct with the influence of the Church of England. The position of the Establishment, its ritual and its ceremonies, its growth and spirit strength, its political power, its discussions and controversies, its great divines, have all had an intimate relationship with his prolonged life and public efforts. And not the least remarkable feature of his career is the fact that the sincere, and even enthusiastic, Churchman, has retained his sentiments of admiration and regard for the Church of England as an organization, while in recent times disestablishing its sister in Ireland, and threatening the Established Churches in Wales and Scotland.

There can be no doubt as to the power wielded by the Church. Its historic environment lends a weight and dignity to the Establishment such as is only possible in a country like England, where the very soil is permeated with memories of the past. For a thousand years it has influenced the politics, the laws, and the sentiments of the people. Sometimes right, and sometimes wrong, it has yet always been impressive and influential. In the making of England, the great Churchmen, such as Bede and Archbishop Anselm, Dunstan and Thomas a Becket, Stephen Langton and William of Wykeham, Jewell and Herbert and Hooker, Jeremy Taylor and Bishop Butler, have had no small place. Its separation from Rome changed the current of history and the destiny of the nation. While a Cardinal Wolsey or an Archbishop Laud became an impossibility in the future, so also did a James the Second. And during the corruption and laxity which controlled the Court throughout the reign of Charles the Second, the Church kept alive, in some degree, at least the spirit of religion in the country.

At the beginning of this century it had passed through a period of profound religious lethargy. Mr. Gladstone, in his "Chapter of Autobiography," deals at length with its condition. Christendom, he declares, might have been challenged to show a clergy so secular and lax, or congregations so cold, irreverent, and indevout. The abuses were very great, and no more attempt was made to extend the organization of the Church abroad than to reform or elevate its work at home. "It is a retrospect," he adds, "full of gloom, and, with all our Romanizing and all our Rationalizing, what man of sense would wish to go back to those dreary times?" But between 1831 and 1840 the transformation began. Men of high intellect and earnest work commenced to get the upper hand. Bishop Blomfield and Dean Hook, Manning and Newman, Pusey and Arnold, gradually inspired the people and the congregations with some of their own Christian enthusiasm and activity. Then followed a general and remarkable uprising of religious energy throughout the Establishment, as to which Mr. Gladstone goes on to say: "It saved the Church."

Even without that revival of Christian zeal, the Establishment was very strong. It would probably have fought a great fight for the maintenance of its union with the State, had such a crisis come before the period of religious lethargy had passed away. And since then the Church has grown steadily stronger, and better able to cope with any future difficulty of the kind. As a national organization, it has indeed undergone little constructive change from the days of Elizabeth—upon whose statutes it still rests—until the present day. The English people love stability in their institutions, and it takes a long time to convince them of the need of change, even in cases where an impartial onlooker might think reform absolutely imperative. And to Mr. Gladstone this historic continuity of the Monarchy and the Church seems to have had an especial charm. Writing in 1839, he declared in words which he does not appear to have ever withdrawn or modified:

> "The permanent and unbroken existence of the Church as a visible institution through so many ages, its having survived the wreck of that vast empire on which it was first engrafted, and, again, its having outlived the vitality of most of those modern monarchies which arose out of the seminal period of the middle ages, retaining all the essential conditions as they were in the very first era of its existence, is not only an elevating idea to the Christian, but it is in itself a standing witness to the truth of his religion, and a powerful corroboration of his faith, operating in a similar manner to its awful counterpart, the equally permanent, unbroken, and palpable existence of the Jewish race, in a state of exile from the covenant of grace."

Mr. Gladstone has always believed in the doctrine of Apostolical succession and the divine descent of the Church. But there have been degrees in the application of this belief. In his earlier works he urged the union of Church and State upon the high ground of a national recognition of Christianity being the mission and duty of any body of men banded together in the form of a nation; and a dependent nation, such as Ireland, was to accept the Church of the greater State. There could, of course, be only one State Church in England to him, the Episcopal, established, and apostolical form. Men should be made sensible, he explained, in a magazine article, October, 1843, "That God's dispensation of love was not a dispensation to communicate His gifts by ten thousand channels, nor to establish with ten thousand elected souls as many distinct, independent relations." The work was to be carried on through their being called into one spacious fold, where they would be fed with one food, surrounded with one defence, filled with one sentiment of community, and brotherhood, and identity.

As time passed his views became greatly modified. In December, 1844, he stated in the *Quarterly Review* that "the Church of England has to deal with the people of England; and in adapting her modes of procedure to the national character, she will know how to give to civil analogies their full value." Then came the steady progress of the nation towards religious toleration in the most complete form. Equality of position there was not, and cannot be, so long as there is an Established Church, but equality of opportunity soon came to be a recognized fact. Civil penalties upon dissent were removed, the schools and universities were thrown open, tests were abolished, and the common Christianity and citizenship of Churchman and Nonconformist was more and more recognized.

In 1863, Mr. Gladstone strongly favoured a proposal to abolish the declarations made by mayors and other officials, that they would not use their municipal positions to the detriment of the Establishment. In a letter to Bishop Wilberforce on March 21st of that year, he declared that this was a point of sore contact with Dissenters: "Every time it is tendered to them, it arouses sectarian jealousies, presents the Church as demanding something of them, as endeavouring to narrow and restrain their freedom of action, and this in the form most of all offensive, namely, by words put into their own mouths. It is very wise to avoid fretting these sore places, and to let them heal." And so with various other reforms looking to the establishment of Nonconformists in a position of equal liberty and opportunity. The State Church itself remained intact; its properties, which have been estimated at nine hundred millions of dollars in value, continued undisturbed; Parliamentary grants grew smaller, while voluntary contributions immensely increased; and when the time came for hostile action in Ireland, the Church of England in England had proved its material power, made firm its religious influence, and strengthened its national position by the friendly treatment of Dissenters.

During the discussions upon the Irish Church Disestablishment two points were prominent, which may be mentioned here. The one was the plainly increased strength of the English branch of the Church; the other was the fresh modification in Mr. Gladstone's views. The basis upon which the Establishment rested in England was complex, and a curious combination of the sentimental and the practical. Its connection with history and legislation has been mentioned, and there are still very many who look back, as did Mr. Gladstone, with mingled pride and veneration, to the annals of a Church whose Sees are older than the Monarchy; whose charters were confirmed by Canute; whose parishes, in very many cases, stand as they did in the days of the Norman

Conquest; whose cathedrals, and churches, and colleges are the product of generation after generation of Englishmen; whose Bishops have shared in the work and growth of Parliament for centuries; whose Courts and Convocations still form part of the national constitution, despite the passing interregnum of Cromwell; whose liturgy is a link with the most distant ages of English Christianity, and embodies the most beautiful elements of cultured religion; whose property constitutes a sort of consecrated reserve fund dedicated by the nation to religious worship and the education of the poor.

This was the opinion, the heartfelt sentiment, of Mr. Gladstone; but in 1868 there came to be a saving clause attached to the practical application of his feeling. The Church must do something in return for the mantle of safety, the privileges of power, which might be afforded by the State. In other days the maintenance of a union between Church and State had seemed a matter of sacred duty on the part of the latter, but now he thought it should depend, in the respective cases of England and Ireland, upon the value and extent of the work which might be performed by the Church. As to what constituted the basis for preserving such a union, he is very explicit in the "Chapter of Autobiography" (1868), already quoted from:

> "An Establishment that does its work in much, and has the hope and likelihood of doing it in more; an Establishment that has a broad and living way open to it, into the hearts of the people; an Establishment that can command the services of the present by the recollections and traditions of a far-reaching past; an Establishment able to appeal to the acting zeal of the greater portion of the people, and to the respect or scruples of almost the whole; whose children dwell chiefly on her actual living work and service, and whose adversaries, if she has them, are in the main content to believe that there will be a future for them and their opinions; such an Establishment should surely be maintained."

As the years had passed, the intellectual activity of the Church had grown in force, and soon came to excel that of the Nonconformist bodies, whilst fully equalling its own enhanced religious vitality. It is natural that such should have been the case. Where distinguished position, social appreciation, political power, and great opportunities exist, it seems a matter of course that the able men of the nation should predominate. But, even with these advantages, the fact was not an obvious one until the revival of the spiritual influence of the Church had harmonized with, and helped, its national strength. Then, indeed, the Establishment progressed, and, in time, found amongst its great personalities the learning of Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, the statesmanship of Archbishop Tait, the enthusiasm of Dean Stanley, the eloquence of Magee of Peterborough and Wilberforce of Oxford, the historical powers of Dean Milman and Dean Merivale, Dean Hook and Dean Church, the scholarship of Bishop Lightfoot and Bishop Stubbs, the oratory of Canon Liddon and Canon Farrar. To the sincere Churchman it became indeed and in truth the central figure of English life—great in history, beneficent in the present, greater and better in the future. To quote the late Bishop of Peterborough in one of those orations for which he was so famous:

> "Give me the solid trunk, the aged stem,
> That rears aloft its glorious diadem;
> That through long years of battle, or of storm,
> Has striven whole forests round it to reform;
> That still, through lightning flash and thunder stroke,
> Retains its vital sap and heart of oak.
> Such gallant tree for me shall ever stand,
> A great rock's shadow in a weary land."

Gradually, however, as the Nonconformist influence grew in politics, the very prosperity of the Established Church drew attention to its national predominance, while its internal disputes upon forms or ceremonies, and the sometimes assertive social follies of its clergy, served to accentuate, in Radical minds, the desirability of an active effort towards severing its union with the State and taking away its national endowments. The Irish Church, despite the distinction drawn by Mr. Gladstone between an energetic, strong, and serviceable Establishment, and one which was alleged to be weak, inefficient, and decadent, became a sort of precedent for an agitation which finally assumed shape in the elections of 1885. The Premier refused to directly take up the issue or to favour in any way immediate disestablishment. But he could not "forecast the dim and distant courses of the future." "I think it obvious," said he, on the 17th of September, in his Manifesto to the people, "that so vast a question cannot become practical until it shall have grown familiar to the public mind by thorough discussion; with the further condition that the proposal, when thoroughly discussed, shall be approved."

And although he went on to say that, by devotedness of life and solidity of labour, the clergy were laying a good foundation for the time to come, and that the Church appeared eminently suited to the needs of the future, his words were sufficiently remarkable to make the question appear an immediate issue to many of the stronger supporters of the Establishment. At any rate the Conservatives and the leaders of the Church took it up in that way, and made the country ring with reproaches and denunciation of the leader who had gone so far afield since the days when he admired Eldon, and followed Wellington. Lord Salisbury, at Newport, delivered a speech which was almost passionate in its defence of the Church, and there seems little doubt that the elections were unfavourably affected, so far as the Liberals were concerned, by the mere suspicion of intended interference. Mr. Gladstone did not follow up the policy of which he was suspected, and it is not probable that he had any desire or intention of doing so, nor is it conceivably possible that Disestablishment could be anything except a severe and painful blow to his strongest affections and feelings.

Still, the bare admission of its possibility, coming from so life-long a supporter of the State Church, was a more than curious occurrence, and marked the distance he had travelled since 1839. Speaking on November 15th, at Edinburgh, he further explained his position. The Irish Church had been a "mockery of an Establishment," and therefore it had to go, but the situation in England was very different:

> "Instead of being a case in which there is nothing to say, it is a case in which there is a great deal to say; instead of being the mockery of a national Church, it is a Church with regard to which its defenders say that it has the adhesion and support of a very large majority of the people, and I confess I am very doubtful whether the allegation can be refuted. It is a Church which works very hard. It is a Church that is endeavouring to do its business, a Church that has infinite ramifications through the whole fabric and structure of society, a Church which has laid a deep hold upon many hearts as well as many minds. The disestablishment of the Church of England would be a gigantic operation."

He, therefore, urged his hearers, and through them the party generally, not to make disestablishment a party question—not so much because of any principle involved, as because it was inexpedient and unwise. And the result proved him to have been eminently correct. Writing on November 28th, 1886, he embodied in a few words, and in a published letter, the basis upon which the Irish Church had really been treated, and at the same time placed himself upon somewhat more defined ground: "In my opinion, which receives from day to day more and more illustration, Church Establishments cannot and ought not to continue unless they prove themselves useful to the maintenance of the higher life of the nation." And, as he was constantly speaking of the beneficent influence and growing Christian power of the Church, this ought to have put the suspicious at rest. So far as he was concerned, it probably did. And the results in a number of constituencies in 1885 was perhaps the influence which induced the Radicals to turn their attention to Wales and Scotland. Here they were upon better ground for agitation. In neither country could the other party say, and many modern Liberals feel, with Lord Beaconsfield, in a speech of nearly thirty years before, that:

> "By the side of the State of England there has gradually arisen a majestic corporation—wealthy, powerful, independent—with the sanctity of a long tradition, yet sympathizing with authority, and full of consideration, even deference, to the civil power. Broadly and deeply planted in the land, mixed up with all our manners and customs, one of the main guarantees of our local government, and, therefore, one of the prime securities of our common liberties, the Church of England is part of our history, part of our life, part of England itself."

In Scotland this could hardly be said of the Established Church. It did not represent the religious views of a majority of the people, although it might be difficult to clearly define the serious points of distinction between the three Presbyterian Churches of the North; except that one had received and still held State endowments, which the others spurned. It has done, and is doing, much good work for the poor, and in the building up and endowing of new parishes. But its roots do not strike down into the lives of the people to the same extent, or in the same way, as in England. Its traditions are not nearly so effective, or its influence so great. Yet it wields considerable power, and is able to make a good fight if the time of need ever comes. From 1886 onwards the agitation amongst Scotch Liberals and English Radicals for its disestablishment grew stronger. More than one deputation waited upon Mr. Gladstone, but for a long time he preferred to say that it was a matter for Scotland to decide, a question which would be best settled by the union of all three Churches, and the consequent extinction of past and present differences without the further intervention of the State.

But this did not commend itself to the independent Churches or to many politicians, and gradually the Liberal party became more or less pledged to support disestablishment in Scotland. It was not a solution of the difficulty which Mr. Gladstone particularly liked, and, so far as can be judged, it was forced upon him by external pressure. While, however, not in warm sympathy with the idea, he cannot be said to have ever been strongly opposed to it, so that, as a matter of fact, the whole matter seems to have turned upon political eventualities. In 1885 he had urged the Liberals of Scotland not to make it a party question. By 1893 it had become a distinct issue in his mind, and he was able to tell a deputation during the month of August that "the present state of things in Scotland involves a political injustice, and, further, a direct injury to religion." It now appeared evident to him that the only way to reunite the Churches of Scotland was by removing the principle of Establishment, to which the Free Church seemed so strongly opposed.

For the latter organization he had always entertained much sympathy. About 1835 he had met and heard Dr. Chalmers, and his admiration for that great divine remained strong throughout life. During the Jubilee of the Free Church in May, 1893, Mr. Gladstone wrote a letter which was read in the Assembly, and which expressed his belief that the leaders of the Disruption in 1843 were "the genuine representatives of the spirit of the Scottish Reformation." The spectacle of a number of men giving up their temporal goods and expectations for the sake of conscience, excited his own sympathy, and "the cordial and enthusiastic admiration of Christendom." Still, the question of disestablishment did not become vital in Scotland, and when the Liberal leader had retired from public life, not long after these latter declarations, the problem remained pending, and must apparently continue to do so, until taken up actively as a party matter, and by the Liberal leaders as a practical and living subject.

In Wales, the situation had been very different. So far as Mr. Gladstone was concerned, it was more contradictory, and in some ways more important. The question in Scotland was, and is, essentially local. That in Wales was intimately related to the general problem of English Establishment. Speaking in the House of Commons on May 24th, 1870, Mr. Gladstone declared that "as regards the identity of these Churches, the whole system of known law, usage, and history, has made them completely one; there is a complete ecclesiastical, constitutional, legal, and, I may add, for every practical purpose, historical identity, between the Church in Wales and the rest of the Church of England. I think, therefore, it is practically impossible to separate the case of Wales from that of England." He also pointed out that the four Welsh sees were held by the suffragans of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and formed a portion of the Church under his administration as truly and fully as any four English sees which might be named.

But as time passed on he became permeated with the federal idea. The local interests of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales were, under this principle, to be treated separately. Even in 1870, action had been so taken with regard to Ireland, and there gradually developed a tendency towards the point where similarly separate treatment seemed right in the other countries. To the Radical wing of his party, it seemed an easy solution of the changes they desired—Ireland first, then Scotland, then Wales, and then, through cumulative precedent, England. Of course, the Conservatives saw the danger, and resisted it so far as possible, although it did not take serious shape until the declaration in favour of Home Rule. From 1885 forward, every question which was brought up, and which largely or specially interested any one of the three minor countries in the Union, was placed by Mr. Gladstone in the category of those which must be decided by, and in accordance with, the wish of the majority in that country.

Slowly, but surely, he seems to have reached the decision that disestablishment must be so treated. The Irish Church he had long ago dealt with, partly on this principle, partly on that of national inefficiency. Then came Scotland, to which he was more or less indifferent as being a denomination with which he was not connected by ties of any particular sympathy. Such as there were seemed to be more with the Free Church than with the Establishment. And, finally, he decided that the Church in Wales ought to be treated in accordance with the wishes of a Welsh majority. In an address at Chester, on June 27th, 1892, he said: "I am speaking of disestablishment in Wales, and not England, for in England, as far as I know, there has been no pronouncement of national sentiment to be thought of or compared for a moment to what we have in Wales; but in Wales we know very well how the matter stands, so far as Welsh opinion is concerned, and we contend that it is a matter in which Welsh opinion ought not to be overridden by English opinion." A year later, writing to Mr. Stuart Rendel, M.P. (August 8th, 1893), the Premier declared that:

> "The identification of sentiment which prevails between the Liberal party and the people of Wales makes it certain, by evidence far stronger than any words of mine could supply, that when the time arrives for the ultimate decision of questions of priority, the leaders of the party for whom, as well as for myself, I can undertake to speak will do the utmost that the general situation will admit in urging the claims of Wales, not merely for a preliminary measure, but for a full and effective plan of disestablishment to be carried through with a steady hand."

Aside from the question of union with the English Church—a matter which also arose in connection with the Irish branch—the desire of a majority of the Welsh people for disestablishment is undoubted. The Conservatives and Churchmen claim, on the other hand, and with truth, that the Church is making steady progress, that she is yearly increasing her efficiency, her usefulness, and her membership. But she is still in a minority, and it will require very strenuous and perhaps impossible exertions during the immediate years of the future to escape from this substantial basis for a repetition of Mr. Asquith's disestablishment measure of 1894. However that may be, Mr. Gladstone, by declaring in favour of such legislation, marked his final stage upon the road, beginning with a Divine origin and imperative national necessity for an Established Church, to that of a State Church upheld by efficiency and dependent upon the will of a popular majority.

During his long career, Mr. Gladstone had maintained an intimate connection with most of the controversies which have either stirred up the dry bones of English ecclesiasticism, or served as a life-giving influence within the Church generally. As a political leader, he naturally took part in Parliamentary discussions upon the many questions of this nature which have arisen; while, as Prime Minister during a considerable period, he has shared with Her Majesty in the appointment of many bishops and other ecclesiastics. When the great influence of the Bishops in controlling the Church, in managing their immense dioceses, and in doing all manner of Christian, moral, and charitable work amongst the people, is considered, the importance of the fact that, in 1884, eighteen out of the twenty-six owed their appointments to Mr. Gladstone, will be appreciated. The following list is, therefore, of interest as showing the type of men selected by him. The date of appointment is also given:

Edward White Benson	Archbishop of Canterbury...1883
Lord Arthur Hervey	Bishop of Bath and Wells...1869
Edward Harold Browne	Bishop of Winchester.........1873
Harvey Goodwin	Bishop of Carlisle.............1869
Frederick Temple	Bishop of Exeter...............1869
Christopher Wordsworth	Bishop of Lincoln.............1869
John Jackson	Bishop of London.............1869
George Moberley	Bishop of Salisbury............1869
James Fraser	Bishop of Manchester.........1870
Richard Durnford	Bishop of Chichester..........1870
William Stubbs	Bishop of Oxford...............1870
Joshua Hughes	Bishop of St. Asaph...........1870
James Richard Woodford	Bishop of Ely....................1873
John Charles Ryle	Bishop of Liverpool............1880
Ernest R. Wilberforce	Bishop of Newcastle...........1882
Richard Lewis	Bishop of Llandaff.............1883
George Ridding	Bishop of Southwell...........1884
William Boyd Carpenter	Bishop of Ripon................1884

Many of these names are household words in England, and have reflected lustre upon the Established Church. Archbishop Benson, Dr. Ryle, Dr. Fraser, Dr. Stubbs, Dr. Wilberforce, and Dr. Boyd Carpenter are specially distinguished, and in making such selections Mr. Gladstone has done himself much honour, while performing a substantial service to the Church. One of these appointments, however, created a most stormy agitation and conflict in Church circles at the time. In October, 1869, and upon the Premier's recommendation, Dr. Temple was made Bishop of Exeter. He had been one of the authors of the famous volume of "Essays and Reviews" which had been published some nine years before, and promptly condemned in Convocation by nearly every Bishop on the Bench. It was not so much the contents of his own essay, as the fact of its association with others—of which it afterwards appeared he knew nothing—that aroused the commotion.

The essay had been withdrawn from circulation, and he had disclaimed all responsibility for the errors contained in the book. But none the less his reputation for non-orthodox views remained strong, and in writing to Archbishop Tait regarding the four appointments, of which Dr. Temple's was one, Mr. Gladstone said that he was hardly sanguine enough to believe that one of the names would pass without noise. A tremendous agitation started almost immediately, and it might be supposed, to look back now, that the Premier had proposed to place a criminal on the Bench instead of putting one of the most brilliant—and afterwards popular—divines of the Church in charge of a diocese which he administered beyond all cavil. Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Pusey, Dean Hook and Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln (Mr. Gladstone's old-time friend), Dr. Ellicott of Gloucester and Bristol, Dr. Magee of Peterborough, and even Bishop Wilberforce himself, opposed the appointment, and protested against Dr. Temple's consecration.

At first, Mr. Gladstone thought little of the storm, and declared in a letter to the Primate that the movement was "like a peculiar cheer we sometimes hear in the House of Commons, vehement, but thin." The battle, however, raged more and more fiercely, and no effort was left untried, up to the very day of the Bishop's enthronement, to avert what one of Dr. Temple's future associates on the Episcopal Bench referred to "as, perhaps, the greatest sin with respect to fidelity to revealed truth in which the Church of England has been involved since the Reformation." Archbishop Tait and Dr. Benson—who afterwards succeeded him in the Primacy—defended the appointment, and, on December 29th, the new Bishop was duly and properly consecrated. Time has, perhaps, afforded the best defence in this connection, and few would afterwards be found to regret Mr. Gladstone's choice for the See of Exeter.

In questions of Church ritual, and rubrics, and ceremony, Mr. Gladstone took a life-long and interested part. The Gorham and Denison cases, the Bishop Colenso controversy, the proposed union of the English and Russian churches, the prolonged conflict, and final compromise, regarding the Athanasian Creed, and the use of "the damnatory clauses," the varied trials and troubles in the Church over Ritualism, the powers and revival of Convocation, the development of the Colonial Church, and many other topics and subjects of importance to the Church at large, have been discussed or dealt with by him—in Parliament, or in speech; in letter, or frequent conversation. Many of his views were important and interesting, but only one matter can be referred to here. Writing on June 4th, 1850, concerning the Gorham case, and the Privy Council's assumption of the right to decide what doctrines might or might not debar a clergyman from preferment in the Church, he told Bishop Blomfield, of London, that:

> "I find it no part of my duty, my Lord, to idolize the bishops of England and Wales, or to place my conscience in their keeping. I do not presume, or dare, to speculate upon their particular decisions; but I say that, acting jointly, solemnly, publicly, responsibly, they are the best and most natural organs of the judicial office of the Church in matters of heresy; and, according to reason, history, and the Constitution, in that subject-matter they are the fittest and safest counsellors of the Crown."

It was this decision which, by helping to place the State in declared supremacy over the Church, contributed to the final passage of Manning and others from its ranks. Meantime, amid all the din of party and ecclesiastical battle, Mr. Gladstone seems to have always been anxious to suppress or modify the disputes which for so many years have shaken the Church to its very base, and at intervals appeared to seriously threaten the whole structure. The Ritualistic struggle was one in which he took a very pronounced part, and this has practically settled itself by mutual compromise and conciliation, though it is one which may at any moment in the future again darken the horizon. In October, 1884, "our marvellous Premier," as the *Times* called him in referring to the event, wrote a long letter to the Bishop of St. Asaph upon the question of disestablishment. It was historical in the main, rather than controversial, and urged strenuously the necessity of peace and unity within the Church. His reference to the discussions and dissensions of the past is worthy of note:

> "The last half-century has been a period of the most active religious life known to the Reformed Church of England. It has also been the period of the sharpest internal discord. That discord has, of late, been materially allayed, not, I believe, through the use of mere narcotics, not because the pulse beats less vigorously in her veins, but through the prevalence, in various quarters, of wise counsels, or, in other words, the application to our ecclesiastical affairs of that common sense by which we desire that our secular affairs should always be governed."

Amid all these varying developments in the history of the Church of England, and Mr. Gladstone's connection with it in politics or in person, there can be no doubt of his own sincere love for the Church in which he had been brought up, and in which he first felt, and so long realized, the impulse of Christian principle and action. And the Establishment has greatly changed during this memorable century. The recognition of religion in England no longer involves the dominance of a lifeless organization, the despotism of a peculiar creed, or the infliction of civil penalties or social disabilities upon Dissenters. The Church of England is still the child of the State, but how changed the State! It has not been for a prolonged period, and can never again become, the instrument of tyranny. But if it desires to retain its national position and power, the Establishment should, more and more as the years roll on, be the instrument of liberty, and the promoter of true Christian fraternity. It should, as a distinguished statesman once pointed out, combine orthodoxy with toleration, and prevent religious enthusiasm from degenerating into extravagance, and ceremony from being degraded into superstition. In this hope and line of thought, Beaconsfield and Gladstone found at least one common ground. And whatever may have been the temporary political requirements and veiled language of a later day, there is equally little doubt that Mr. Gladstone retains in retirement that sentiment of love for the Church which he so strongly demonstrated on entering public work sixty odd years before. The morning and evening of his life have been equally distinguished by devotion to the Church, although a whole ocean of change rolls between the political views of the young man of 1830 and the veteran of the Nineties.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

TO a Liberal leader in Great Britain the Constitution provides certain checks and controlling influences which are at times unpleasant. To a Conservative leader the public very often provides impulses and compelling forces which may also be termed unpleasant. But it may fairly be said that both the checks and the impulses are necessary in a properly regulated government. Change is sometimes desirable, and sometimes dangerous. Reforms are sometimes good, and at other times the reverse. Hence the value of a second chamber which may either modify legislation, or delay it in order that the people can finally and definitely pass upon it. This value has now become a truism in national politics all over the civilized world, and is recognized in every country which boasts constitutional government.

Mr. Gladstone has always admitted this principle. He has never, for one moment, advocated or seriously suggested the abolition of the British Upper House. He has at times fought that body with energy and force, and has denounced it with all the eloquence of which he is master, when, upon more than one important occasion, its intervention delayed his legislation or hampered his will. He has also succeeded in limiting its power, and more strictly defining its place and influence in the Constitution. But it is one thing to change and improve; another to destroy. People living outside the British Isles, and many living within them, hardly appreciate the influence and historic work of the British aristocracy. The power, as well as the weakness, of the House of Lords depends, indeed, upon a vast number of considerations, many of which have had a controlling influence upon Mr. Gladstone's own character and career.

It is, in the first place, representative of a large class in the community. The few hundred Peers who sit in the Upper House are only a small and titled part of what is, properly speaking, the aristocracy of the realm, with roots in every parish and associated with every stage of the national development. But this influence and this place is not held by the mere possession of title. "The greater part of the English nobility," says Walter Savage Landor, "have neither power nor title. Even those who are noble by right of possession, the hereditary lords of manors, with large estates attached to them, claim no titles at home or abroad." Of such are families like the Dymokes, the Derings, the Scropes, the Leghs, the Aclands, and many more; possessed of great estates, which even the ducal families of Devonshire or Norfolk might be proud to own.

And titled or untitled, Peers or Commoners, the heads of these families all over England fulfil the same public offices and duties, and represent a life which is permeated with the same sense of an immemorial past and an hereditary dignity and honour which they desire to have conserved and handed down to future generations. It was this aristocracy which protected Wycliffe and his preaching friars, and helped to lay the foundation for modern liberty of conscience and worship. It was the Barons of England who won from King John at Runnymede the charter of British political freedom. It was the House of Lords which took a chief part in driving King James from the throne. inaugurating the Protestant succession, and thus destroying the still active theory of a divine right in kings. It was this aristocracy which in rude ages, and amid more or less barbarous surroundings, cultivated literature and encouraged art, helped to kindle and to keep alive the light of the sciences, promoted the spread of knowledge, and practised a wide and generous hospitality. It was this aristocracy which for centuries helped to lead public opinion, or enforce public order; to resist monarchical oppression, or control popular lawlessness. In later days it governed England as a Whig oligarchy or a Tory combination. But everywhere, and constantly, its influence for good or bad has been writ large upon British history and the surroundings of the British people.

Had the House of Lords represented nothing except itself, that body would long since have been but a memory and thing of the past. As it is, Cromwell tried in vain to dispense with it, and equally in vain to create something in its place. Charles the Second had to restore it with privileges and powers intact, and no one in these later days has better understood and appreciated the real influence of that body than Mr. Gladstone. And to properly comprehend British politics and the struggles of English Liberalism, it must be borne in mind that the Upper House has its roots deep down in the large aristocratic class which cherishes the hereditary principle, and controls the manor as well as the rectory; in the other large class which aims at attaining a similar position, either by the use of inherited wealth, or the acquisition of an hereditary title; in the large body which also looks upon hereditary rank as a necessary appendix to the Monarchy, and considers its maintenance in prestige, and in some degree of power, as a part of loyalty to the Sovereign and the constitution.

Mr. Gladstone was trained amid these influences. His father belonged to the class which aims at founding a County family, and succeeds eventually in doing so. He died a Baronet, and, had Canning lived a little longer, he would have received a peerage. The son associated at Eton with scions of the principal families in England, and a little later attended the most exclusive college in the most aristocratic of all universities. A letter written by Richard Chenevix Trench, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, in November, 1831, voices the sentiments of the major part of Mr. Gladstone's early associates:

> "To me, it seems that an aristocracy is necessary as the representative of the continuity of the conscience of a nation. Unless there is something in a country not embraced by the birth and death of the fleeting generation which, at any moment, may compose it, you may have a horde, but you cannot have a nation. If it be a nation, it must look before and after."

When he left college, Mr. Gladstone entered public life under the most ultra-aristocratic auspices, and during many subsequent years was aided by similar influences. Speaking in 1835, and in defence of the Upper House, he described it as "the original barrier between the usurpations of the Crown and the licentiousness of the people," and urged mutual harmony between the two Parliamentary bodies, and a just recognition of each other's independent powers and position. As the years passed on, and he assumed the lead of a party which, at intervals, came into collision with the Lords, his feelings of friendship towards that body were naturally much modified, and from defence he turned to attack. But it was never with a view to its destruction, or even, until very recent years, with a thought of practical reform, or change in its construction. It seems rather to have been the expression of political antagonism by a party leader towards a portion of the Constitution which occasionally delayed his proposals or hampered his actions. When the difficulties were smoothed over and adjusted, as was the case in all important matters, the anger of the moment would be forgotten, and the Constitution go on as before in its play of change versus caution, just as the country itself indulged alternately in action and reaction.

Upon three great occasions, Mr. Gladstone and the House of Lords came into direct and sustained conflict. In two instances, the Liberal leader triumphed; in the third and last, he lost. When the Upper House rejected the repeal of the Paper duties in 1860, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he then was, quietly waited until the next session, when he included his proposal for repeal in the annual financial arrangements, and practically dared the Upper House to throw out the bill in which they were combined. In 1871, his Government proposed to abolish the system of Purchase in the Army, and the measure was promptly rejected by the Lords. With equal promptitude, the Premier called in the Queen's prerogative and compelled the passage of his bill. The prolonged controversies over the Irish Church and the Franchise measure of 1884 were settled by compromise, but in the Home Rule issue the Upper House unquestionably triumphed—and against the greatest orator and popular leader of the age.

To wield such a power in a community which believes itself democratic, and against frequent majorities in a body which is elective and popularly representative, implies the possession of a wide influence and a very substantial place in the Constitution. Otherwise, the proceedings of the House of Lords, instead of being important and sometimes strongly effective, would be absolutely farcical. The social and personal weight of the aristocracy in the various local communities is one cause of this power. The greater part of its members are popular as individuals, while the class as a whole is liked by the people. Upon this point, Mr. Gladstone has expressed himself with great clearness. In the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1877, he said:

> "It is not the love of equality which has carried into every corner of the country the distinct, undeniable, popular preference, whenever other things are substantially equal, for a man who is a lord over a man who is not. In truth, *the love of freedom itself is hardly stronger in England than the love of aristocracy*. As Sir William Molesworth, himself not the least of our political philosophers, once said to me of the force of this feeling with the people: 'It is a religion.' It is not the love of equality which lifts to the level of a popular toast at every average or promiscuous public dinner the name of the House of Lords. . . . The great strength of the House in popular estimation lies in the admirable manner in which a large proportion of them, without distinction of politics, perform public and social duties in their local, yet scarcely private, spheres."

Writing in the *North American Review*—September, 1878—Mr. Gladstone reiterated this opinion, and declared that "the English people are not believers in equality; they do not, with the famous declaration of July 4th, 1776, think it would be self-evident that all men are born equal. They hold rather the reverse of that proposition. At any rate, in practice, they are what I may call determined inequalitarians—in some cases without even knowing it." Speaking seven years before, at the great meeting of 20,000 people on Blackheath, he had said in the same connection: "I have a shrewd suspicion in my mind that a very large proportion of the people of England have a sneaking kindness for the hereditary principle. My observation has not been of a very brief period, and what I have observed is this, that wherever there is anything to be done, or to be given, and there are two candidates for it who are exactly alike—alike in opinion, alike in character, alike in possessions, the one being a commoner, and the other a lord—the Englishman is very apt indeed to prefer the lord."

The potency of this factor has been seen in Parliamentary elections ever since the days of the Reform Bill. Every House of Commons has contained a large proportion of men in both parties who either bear courtesy titles as the son or other relation of a peer, as did Lord Hartington for so many years; or who are connected with the aristocracy by birth or marriage; or who own large estates in the country; or who, perhaps, bear Irish titles, as did Lord Palmerston. In 1894 it was found, indeed, that one hundred and sixty members of the Upper House had been trained as representatives of the people in the Commons. The great majority of the magistrates in England are connected with the same class, while the County Councils actually contained in the year above mentioned over one hundred and twenty Peers.

The wealth and landed interest of the Peerage is another strong influence. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Manchester, in 1872, declared that the average income of the members of the House of Lords was $100,000, which would involve a total revenue of something like $50,000,000—and this without reference to the immense number of aristocratic families and county magnates who did not belong to the Peerage proper. In a subsequent speech, Mr. Disraeli stated this estimate to be, in his opinion, accurate, and went on to express his own view of the Upper House—one which certainly seems to have good foundation: "I am inclined to believe that an English gentleman, born to business, managing his own estate, administering the affairs of his county, mixing with all classes of his fellow-men, now in the hunting-field, now in the railway direction, unaffected, unostentatious, proud of his ancestors, if they have contributed to the greatness of our common country, is, on the whole, more likely to form a senator agreeable to English opinion and English taste than any substitute that has yet been proposed."

The historic prestige of the Peerage and the House of Lords has been referred to. It is, indeed, one of the great elements of strength in the preservation of its position and power. The leaders of England have, for centuries, been willing to take a place within its ranks, and to obtain such an opportunity has been the crowning ambition of many eminent men in greatly varied walks of life. And the greatest of them have considered their peerage an honour. Leaders such as Nelson or Wellington, Clive or Clyde, Wolseley or Roberts, have appreciated the compliment of its bestowal, or, perhaps, the privilege of handing it down to their descendants. William Pitt did not disdain the Earldom of Chatham, nor Disraeli the Earldom of Beaconsfield. And Macaulay and Bulwer Lytton considered their titles a fitting crown to their careers. So with myriad others who might be mentioned.

The hereditary principle has also added to this distinction. Many great families have seemed to possess a peculiar degree of ability, and to be able to hand it down from generation to generation, and even from century to century. The Cecils, Stanleys, Herberts, Percies, Howards, and Russells are cases in point. Writing in November, 1890, Mr. Gladstone remarked in this connection: "We have a Prime Minister (Lord Salisbury) whose ancestors were similarly employed, to the great benefit of England ten generations ago. Is not this a good? Is not this tie of lineage for him a link binding him to honour and to public virtue?" Speaking at Edinburgh in 1866, upon his installation as Lord Rector of the University, Carlyle made an interesting statement concerning the origin of the Peerage, and of the men who in so many cases were ancestors of members of the House of Lords in the present century. It was significant also as coming from a man who had little respect for ordinary gauds or baubles:

> "I began gradually to perceive this immense fact, which I really advise every one of you who read history to look out for and read—if he has not found it—it was that the kings of England, from the Norman Conquest to the times of Charles I., had appointed, so far as they knew, those who deserved to be appointed peers. They were royal men, with minds full of justice, and valour, and humanity, and all kinds of qualities that are good for men who have to rule over others. Then their genealogy was remarkable, and there is a great deal more in genealogies than is generally believed at present. I never heard tell of any clever man that came out of entirely stupid people. It goes for a great deal—the hereditary principle in government, as in other things; and it must be recognized as soon as there is any fixity in things."

But this hereditary principle is now supposed in many quarters to be antiquated, undesirable, and useless. To understand the influence of the House of Lords is impossible without appreciating the fact that in England this is not yet so, whatever may be the case in the future. Otherwise, there would be no desire for elevation to the Peerage, such as all modern political history shows to exist strongly and steadily. The honour may be considered a reward of merit or not, as the individual case or momentary prejudice may decide. But to the recipient of the title it is, as a rule, doubly dear, because he is thus enabled to found a noble family, and, as a rule, to make the honour a permanent one. The result is seen in a Second Chamber constantly recruited from amongst the most intellectual, or at any rate active and ambitious, portion of the people, as well as from the class possessed of the hereditary environment of culture and training which might be expected to naturally develop legislators.

During the years between 1830 and 1894 there were 336 Peerages created. Of these, Liberal Premiers were responsible for 217, and Conservative leaders for 119—not that the latter lacked the will so much as they did the power and the opportunity. Naturally, many Peers of to-day owe their patents to Mr. Gladstone, and it is understood that fully a hundred of those who had been raised upon his recommendation voted against the Home Rule Bill of 1893. Amongst what may be termed his creations, we find the navy to have been represented by Beauchamp Seymour, Lord Alcester; diplomacy, by Odo Russell, Lord Ampthill; Indian statecraft, by John Lawrence, Lord Lawrence; banking, by Lionel, Lord Rothschild; poetry, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson; law, by Roundell Palmer, Lord Selborne, and Farrer, Lord Herschell; politics, by Chichester Fortescue, Lord Carlingford, and H. A. Bruce, Lord Aberdare.

Many others of varying degrees of distinction have been elevated by his intervention, while many have had their titles advanced in the Peerage—as in the cases of the Dukes of Fife and Westminster. In 1869, Mr. Gladstone offered a Peerage to George Grote, the eminent historian of Greece, and his letter is interesting. It was dated November 8th:

> "I have the satisfaction of proposing to you, with the authority of Her Majesty, that you should become a Peer of the United Kingdom. You cannot be insensible to that which all will at once perceive, that the proposal which I now make is a simple tribute to your character, services, and attainments. It may, I hope, be pleasing to you, and on that account it gives me a reflected pleasure; but I have a higher gratification in thinking that the acceptance of such an offer, in such a case, has the important effect of adding strength to the House of Lords for the discharge of its weighty duties."

Mr. Grote declined the honour on the ground of being unable to undertake new responsibilities, but expressed great gratification at the offer having come through a Minister "who has entered upon the work of reform with a sincerity and energy never hitherto paralleled." A different type of a letter was one of congratulation, written to Monckton Milnes by Mr. Gladstone, when the former was about to go to the Upper House as Lord Houghton. "If you are about to be removed," he said, "to 'another place,' I sincerely hope you may derive satisfaction from the transfer, which, I believe, would be regarded by the public as a just tribute to your character and powers. The superior beings among whom you would then go could not have more pleasure in welcoming than we, your humble companions, have regret in losing you." There is a touch of almost playful sarcasm in this epistle which it is rather unusual to find in Mr. Gladstone's correspondence. Another influence possessed by the Upper House, in addition to being thus constantly supplied with new members of more or less eminence in the State, is that of debating power and oratory. It has not only given a majority of Ministers to most of the Cabinets in English history, but has contributed to Parliamentary annals very nearly as much skill in debate, and true eloquence in language, as the House of Commons has been able to do with all its flow of talk, and the copious speech of men who remind one in many cases of Thomas Moore's answer to the question, "Why is a pump like Viscount Castlereagh?"

"Because it is a slender thing of wood,
That up and down its awkard arm doth sway;
And coolly spouts and spouts and spouts away,
In one weak, washy, everlasting flood."

From the days of Bacon, and Strafford, and Falkland; Halifax, and Somers, and Bolingbroke; Mansfield, and Chatham, and North; Plunkett, and Erskine, and Eldon; Grey, and Brougham, and Lyndhurst; Derby, and Ellenborough, and Coleridge; Granville, and Cairns, and Selborne; down to those of Salisbury, and Argyle, and Rosebery, the House of Lords has never been without speakers who might fairly be termed great orators. Its debates, though not frequent, have usually been dignified, sometimes even stately, and, to those who study style in speaking, a better school could hardly be found for calm, cool, and often eloquent, reasoning. The Bishops of the Church of England, who rank as Peers, have also given the House some brilliant orators, notably, Dr. Magee and Dr. Wilberforce. Their field, however, is necessarily circumscribed, and it is a question whether they have added proportionately to its reputation in this respect. But they have certainly served to enhance its representative capacity by the whole weight of the Established Church, and its very pronounced influence. So much for the general power and advantages of the House of Lords and the aristocracy as a whole.

The other side of the shield is somewhat obscure. There have always been plenty who desired to change its constitution, to clip its wings, or modify its pretensions. But since the days of Cromwell no responsible statesman appears to have advocated its abolition. Even the great Protector had to restore it in some form of his own—a scheme which proved an arrant failure, but paved the way for the full restoration under Charles the Second. Agitation at times has been pronounced, and even violent; but, so far as can be judged, absolutely ineffective. When the will of the people has been clearly proved, as in the case of the Reform Bill of 1832 and of 1867, the Corn Laws repeal, and Irish Church Disestablishment, the Upper House has invariably given way. When that will has not been clearly expressed, the Lords have sometimes delayed the proposed legislation until public opinion was expressed either one way or the other. When hasty measures have been passed without popular mandate or desire, they have frequently been rejected or beneficially modified.

Naturally, such a line of action has created hostility and aroused Radical animosity. It has in these later days made some journals describe the Lords as an antiquarian society, as a mediæval absurdity, or as "an organized band of the mercenaries of class and privilege." In 1884, during the crisis over the Franchise Bill, when the Upper House accepted the principle of that measure, but insisted upon a Redistribution of Seats Bill being concurrent with it, the storm was very pronounced in certain quarters. Mr. Labouchere was indignant; Sir Wilfrid Lawson was more than angry. They joined other Radicals in calling a mass meeting in Hyde Park, during the progress of which one of the orators urged the people to

"Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep has fallen on you;
Ye are many—they are few!"

At a great meeting in Birmingham, on August 4th, Mr. Chamberlain denounced the action of the Upper House with pronounced vigour. He declared that during the last hundred years it had never contributed one iota to popular liberties, or done anything to advance the common weal. It had, on the contrary, protected every abuse, and sheltered every privilege. "It has denied justice, and delayed reform. It is irresponsible, without independence; obstinate, without courage; arbitrary, without judgment; and arrogant, without knowledge." Mr. Bright, at the same time, joined in the criticism and denunciation, but added: "I think it must be admitted that the great bulk of what I call the thoughtful people of this country—not moved by passion created by the circumstances in which we now are—have not only not expressed themselves, but have never shown any disposition to arrive at the point which would induce them to demand only one House, and the total abolition of the other."

And the unique position of the Upper House is seen in the fact that hardly more than a year after this time both Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain had joined hands with a party which openly and avowedly looked to the House of Lords as the means by which the union of the three kingdoms might be preserved, should the Commons pass the Home Rule Bill. Nine years later, Mr. Chamberlain was one of the strongest champions of the House for its action in throwing out Mr. Gladstone's second Irish measure. It is, therefore, apparent that a Second Chamber which can hold its own, and force compromises upon a dominant party, as in the Franchise matter; or overthrow the labour of years, and the influence of a great personality and leader, as in the case of Mr. Gladstone and Home Rule; or convert to its support Radicals such as Mr. Chamberlain; must constitute a very real power in the State. That power, aside from the hereditary roots and social strength of the Peerage, and the other reasons previously given, is based upon the necessity of having a Second Chamber in the Constitution, as well as upon the care with which it revises and checks public action as represented in the House of Commons without running counter to clearly expressed popular wishes in the country. Upon the latter point, Mr. Gladstone may be quoted. In his Address to the electors of Greenwich—January 24th, 1874—he observed :

> "The welfare of a country can never be effectually promoted by a Government which is not invested with adequate authority. . . . In the years 1868 and 1870, when the mind of the country was unambiguously expressed, the House of Lords had, much to its honour, deferred to that expression in matters of great moment, and I cannot doubt that it would have continued in this course had the isolated and less certain, but still frequent and fresh, indications of public opinion at single elections continued to be in harmony with the powerful and authentic, but now more remote, judgment of 1868."

The necessity of a Second Chamber of some kind in England has been, and is, generally admitted. No considerable civilized nation in the world is without one, although Bulgaria, Greece, Servia, and some of the Central American republics, have got along without any. With a few exceptions, the party leaders of the present day are agreed upon this point. Mr. Gladstone has always believed in an Upper House. Lord Rosebery, at Devonport, on December 11th, 1894, declared that "the question of the existence of a Second Chamber is one of those abstract discussions which, like the propriety of the execution of Charles I., may engage the attention of the debating societies of our rural centres, but are not matters for practical politicians to engage in." Lord Salisbury, on May 22nd, following, expressed the opinion that it was impossible "in a representative Government to avoid a Second Chamber, which shall have the power of referring to the people what the First Chamber does." Mr. H. H. Asquith declared, in November, 1894, that the question of only one House was not a practical matter, nor one which need be discussed, although he was personally rather in favour of it.

The functions of the House of Lords are sufficiently important, but their application has been most variously interpreted, and it is, of course, upon this that so much controversy hangs. Lord Salisbury has declared the Upper House to be "a body which exists for the purpose of preventing the House of Commons from committing mischief behind the backs of the people," and, in another speech, he proclaimed one of its functions to be the ascertainment of the deliberate will of the nation. "They well know," he says of the Peers, "that for good or ill, for wise or foolish, it is the opinion of the nation only that must rule." Mr. Balfour, speaking at Nottingham, on December 5th, 1894, defined two chief objects or functions for this or any other Second Chamber : "Its most important and its most fundamental and most essential duty is to protect the Constitution of the country to which it belongs from rash and hasty innovations. Its second duty is to remedy the legislative blunders, to correct the hastiness and carelessness, which perhaps necessarily must attach occasionally to the legislative efforts of the more hard-working First Chamber in which the initiative of legislation naturally lies." This is the straight Conservative view.

Liberal opinion has been gradually developing in another direction, and somewhat in line with Mr. Gladstone's own progress of thought. It affects two points—the hereditary principle and the veto power. In 1884, at the Birmingham meeting already referred to, Mr. Bright spoke of an old saying, in what he called long past ages, that the path to the temple of honour lay through the temple of virtue. But now, he thought, the law-making Peer never dreamed of such a course of procedure. "We all know, if he does not, that he goes to the temple of honour through the sepulchre of a dead ancestor." His view of the future was very simple: "We must have, if we can, a complete remedy with the least disturbance, and I believe that that may be obtained, and ought to be strenuously demanded, by limiting the veto which the House of Lords exercises over the proceedings of the House of Commons." This was the advanced sentiment of the moment, although there was then, and always has been, a small Radical wing of the party which was ready for abolition, or anything else.

The Home Rule period, and the disruption and modification of parties, followed, and entirely changed the popular position of the Upper House. For the time, it was the defender of the rights and wishes of a majority of the people of England. Many of its severest critics and warmest antagonists became vigorous and fighting friends. But to Mr. Gladstone it had given a terrible blow. In shattering his vast Irish measure, it had broken the labour of years, and had prevented him from accomplishing the last great object upon which, rightly or wrongly, he had set his heart. Had he come out then and there for abolition of the Second Chamber, many, perhaps, would not have been surprised. All that he did do was to threaten a curtailment of its powers—a threat at which its members were not greatly troubled. More he could not do, and it does not seem that more ever can be done by his party until they get a direct, forcible mandate from the people.

During the succeeding session (1894) the Upper House threw out several measures and modified others—especially the Parish Councils Bill. To go into particulars is useless. Good reasons were given, good motives claimed, on both sides. But the fact remained that, with reference to the last-named measure, the Commons had to accept the amendments made by the Lords, or sacrifice the chief Liberal scheme of the session. Mr. Gladstone agreed to accept them, and, at the same time, flung down a vigorous gauntlet of defiance in what turned out to be his last speech in the House. His words certainly did not lack force:

"We are compelled to accompany that acceptance with the sorrowful declaration that the differences, not of a temporary or casual nature merely, but differences of conviction, differences of prepossession, differences of mental habit, and differences of fundamental tendency, between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, appear to have reached a development in the present year such as to create a state of things of which we are compelled to say that, in our judgment, it cannot continue. . . . The issue which is raised between a deliberative assembly elected by the votes of more than six millions of people, and a deliberative assembly occupied by many men of virtue, by many men of talent, of course with considerable diversities and varieties, is a controversy which, when once raised, must go forward to an issue. The issue has been postponed—long postponed, I am glad to say."

He went on to commend "the considerable degree of circumspection, and discretion, and reserve," shown by the House of Lords in the use of its enormous privileges on various occasions within his own recollection. But the question had now become profoundly acute, and "will demand a settlement, and must receive at an early date that settlement from the highest authority." But there was no word of abolition, and the policy pursued, or rather suggested, by his successor in the Premiership must, to a great extent, be accepted as his own. Lord Rosebery's views were clearly promulgated in his speeches at Glasgow and Devonport late in 1894. He considered a Second Chamber absolutely essential to the national well-being; he did not care particularly about the maintenance of the hereditary principle; he wanted an adjustment of the relations between the two Houses in such a way as to make the will of the Commons plainly predominant; he thought the time had come "when the right of the House of Lords to oppose an absolute veto on the wishes of the legislation of the House of Commons should forever cease"; he looked forward to a Second Chamber in the distant future chosen upon a popular basis, consultative rather than legislative, and remaining as the High Court of Justice for the Empire, while constituting a great Imperial Council in which should sit members from outlying British States.

Later on, he proposed to commence by passing a resolution through the House of Commons with regard to the veto power. It cannot be said that this policy was one upon which the Liberals were united. The Radical element wanted something far more violent than a mere clipping of the bird's wings, though they hardly knew what it was they did wish, and certainly did not know how to get it. Mr. Sidney Buxton announced that "they did not wish to reform the House of Lords, as the more it was reformed the stronger it would become." Mr. Asquith, a far more prominent Liberal, declared boldly that: "We are not going to see the creation of a new and more formidable and irresponsible power in this country." Some, therefore, wanted reform; others liked the idea of abolition, but did not see how it could be carried out; others desired anything that would lessen the power of the Peers. Lord Rosebery would undoubtedly have enjoyed forcing upon his own House some of the changes which Lord Russell had urged in 1869, which he had himself advocated in 1884, and which Lord Salisbury had tried to promote in 1888.

Unfortunately, the abolition of the veto power was a very large addition to former proposals for expelling "black sheep," or introducing the elective element, or creating life Peers. The old propositions had been designed to strengthen and improve; the new proposal was intended to weaken and injure. Upon this rather vague policy, therefore, and with these somewhat varied principles, the party fought the electoral contest of 1895. The Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists, on the other hand, were united in idea, and consistent in the presentation of their policy. As Lord Salisbury said in one of his speeches: "It is very easy to remedy undue conservation; it is very difficult to remedy undue destruction." Mr. Balfour claimed that, by the Liberal proposals, it was not intended to deprive the Peers of their privileges, but of their duties. It was, he declared, the business of the House of Lords, in the main, to see that the course of constitutional growth should be a gradual, an even, and a well-considered course; to see that great changes were not carried out until it was seen to be the settled and determined will of the people.

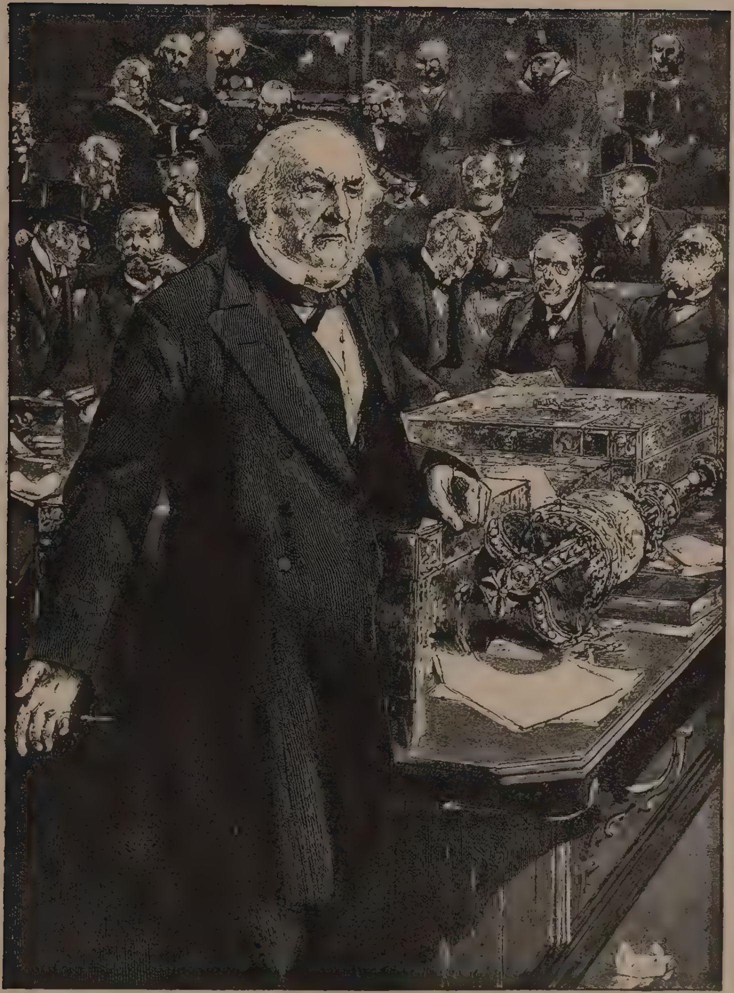
And upon this issue the election was largely fought. If the unprecedented result was any criterion of British opinion regarding the Upper House, it must seem clear that the issue laid down by Lord Rosebery was a mistaken and unpopular one. Like the Church of England, the House of Lords appears to have its roots deep down in the national soil, and, so far as prophecy may be ventured upon, it seems to be safe from attack so long as it does not defy any deliberate and determined mandate of the English people. Reform or modification may probably come, and will, if the Conservative powers in the State are wise; but it should now come from friendly sources, and with a view to strengthen its roots, rather than from hostile elements in the National Parliament, anxious only to weaken or destroy its influence.

Meantime, it has proved one of the pregnant forces in Mr. Gladstone's career. He entered public life an enthusiastic admirer of the Upper House for its action in postponing as late as possible the great reforms of 1832. He left public life with vigorous and natural denunciations upon his lips for the body which had hampered and hindered his legislative actions and proposals. It had been a great and prolonged duel, in which sometimes the statesman had triumphed and sometimes the Peers. And not the least interesting occurrence in this connection was the Queen's offer of an Earldom to the retiring Prime Minister in June, 1885. The honour proffered was not without precedents, but they were very few. Sir Robert Walpole, "the first of modern Prime Ministers," had been made Earl of Orford in 1743. William Pitt (the elder) had accepted the Earldom of Chatham, and in later years Lord John Russell and Mr. Disraeli had been given similar honours. But Mr. Gladstone declined to leave the Commons. His work he thought was not done, and, at all events, he was essentially, and probably felt himself to be, a product of the House of Commons, and better fitted, even at his age, for popular struggle than for aristocratic calmness and the serene air of the Upper House. The event, however, evoked a notable tribute from the *Times:*

> "Whatever may be the judgment of contemporaries and of posterity upon Mr. Gladstone's character, and on his achievements as a statesman, there can be no controversy as to his unique position in the House of Commons. His ascendency in the popular chamber, won in the first instance by a rare combination of eloquence and debating power, with untiring industry and immense stores of knowledge, has grown with the growth and strengthened with the strength of democratic forces. Like other great men who have wielded at will that great assembly, like Pitt and Canning, and Palmerston and Peel, Mr. Gladstone is too proud of his influence and too deeply attached to the scene of his strifes and victories, now extending over more than half a century, to retreat into the dignified but somewhat sleepy shadow of the House of Peers."

Meantime, the House of Lords is a powerful fact, and an evident factor, in British politics, and the British Constitution. It has been, and always will be, a question whether the hereditary principle is an advantage, or the reverse, in its constitution. That principle undoubtedly provides a splended environment for the development of cultured, patriotic, and honourable legislators. It also offers facilities for giving power into the hands of those who can only be termed hereditary blackguards. Upon the whole, a vigorous, trained, and influential aristocracy forms probably as good, if not better, a basis for a Second Chamber as do the millionaires who constitute the American Senate, or the retired, and often unpopular, politicians who make up most of the Colonial Councils or Upper Houses.

An Upper House must always, in the very nature of things, be more or less disliked by the progressive party in the State. It is established and maintained for the very purpose of checking or controlling that party, and no one, during a prolonged career, has more distinctly recognized this fact than did Mr. Gladstone himself. Given certain improvements in its membership, and perhaps an enlargement of base so as to admit life Peers and a still greater number of representative men, and it is really difficult to see where or how a better Second Chamber can be obtained. But as long as the world lasts there will be more or less of conflict between the two sections of a great legislature, as there will be between the parties of the far-off future, or the many leaders who may, in dimly distant days, succeed to the places held by Gladstone and Disraeli, or Salisbury and Rosebery.



MR. GLADSTONE DELIVERING HIS LAST SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

March 1st, 1894.

FREDERICK ARTHUR STANLEY, 1ST LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON,
16TH EARL OF DERBY,

Governor-General of Canada. 1888-93.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CHARACTERISTICS AND HOME LIFE.

THE country homes of England are deservedly famed for their beauty, their historic environment, their artistic graces. The leaders in national politics, achievements, or inherited wealth, are, as a rule, connected with the soil, and known to contemporary annals as living during a part of the year, at least, at some more or less delightful country seat. Lord Beaconsfield at Hughenden Manor, Lord Derby at Knowsley Park, Lord Lytton at Knebworth, Mr. W. H. Smith at Greenlands, Lord Salisbury at Hatfield House, Mr. Chamberlain at Highbury, Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden, Lord Tennyson at Aldworth, the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth, Lord Rosebery at Dalmeny, represent, with myriad others of noble name, of distinguished service, or of merely ordinary wealth, that active, clean, out-of-door life which has done so much, in the past and in the present, to keep England a beautiful country, and the English people a healthy, vigorous race.

Mr. Gladstone's home at Hawarden does not, of course, possess the magnificence of ducal seats, such as Belvoir, Welbeck, or Dunrobin; nor is it, in fact, superior to the unpretentious, but charming, residence of many a simple English country gentleman. Like the most of them, however, it has its bit of history, its ancient castellated ruins, its beautiful park, its substantial home-like appearance. The castle, with its surrounding acres, lies in the Welsh county of Flint, within sight and sound of the Irish Sea, and boasts in its ancient form a history which includes many of England's most interesting struggles. The older castle had been a stronghold of Saxon and Dane and Norman; it had been one of the chain of fortresses, such as Conway and Carnarvon, which so long ruled the Welsh marches; it had associations connecting it with old-time families, such as the Stanleys; and was finally pretty well destroyed in the wars of the Cavaliers and Roundheads.

The modern mansion is a plain, but solid and handsome-looking, structure, the walls gray with a hundred and twenty-five years of storm and sunshine, the turrets standing out in clear and imposing style. Immediately surrounding it are numerous flower beds and gravel walks, then come fences and hedges, and finally the broad and beautiful park stretches for a considerable distance. Not very far away the river Dee creeps towards the ocean, and upon the far horizon Mr. Gladstone can see a cloud in the sky, made by the smoke of Liverpool—his birthplace, and the home of his father for so many years. Close by is the little village of Hawarden—the shrine of many a political pilgrim—and the Church which has become famous through Mr. Gladstone's occasional ministrations, while a few miles farther away is the town of Chester. Lord Hanmer used to be the chief owner of the soil in Flintshire, with 7,300 acres, but Mr. Gladstone came close to him with his 6,900 acres of ground, much of which is beautifully wooded, and preserved in that matchless fashion which results from the aristocracy and gentry of England having their "houses" in London, but their "homes" in the country, and which makes an English park one of the most exquisite things in nature.

The estate of Hawarden came to Mr. Gladstone through his wife, who inherited a life interest in it upon the death, in 1874, of her brother, Sir Stephen Glynne. Aside from this interest, however, it then became the property, by will, of Mr. W. H. Gladstone, and, upon his death, went to his son. Mr. Gladstone's own property in the neighbourhood he afterwards made over to his children, and his wife and himself have, therefore, long been merely tenants for life. But the action was wise from many standpoints. It relieved Mr. Gladstone of much personal care, trained his eldest son in business management, and, perhaps, rendered closer a harmony within the family which is a model to his county and country. Of that family much is known to the public, but nothing that is unpleasant, or incongruous with the high-minded characteristics of the parents. Their first child, William Henry Gladstone, was born in 1840, and died in 1891. He was a member of Parliament for twenty years, married a daughter of Lord Blantyre, left several children, and is remembered for many accomplishments and for his excellent business ability.

The second child, Agnes, is wife of the Very Rev. Dean Wickham of Lincoln, and her eldest daughter was presented to the Queen by Mrs. Gladstone herself in 1893. William, the eldest son of Mrs. Wickham, is said to have distinguished himself at Winchester School by his vigorous Liberalism. The Rev. Stephen Edward Gladstone is the third child of the veteran statesman, and has been for two decades Rector of Hawarden. He has a number of children. The fourth child, Jessie Catherine, died at five years of age. The fifth was Mary, wife of the Rev. Harry Drew, and mother of Dorothy Drew, the little sunbeam who has become so well known as Mr. Gladstone's pet grandchild. The sixth was Miss Helen Gladstone, who for many years has been one of the heads of Newnham College, Cambridge. Then comes Mr. Henry Neville Gladstone, married to a daughter of Lord Rendel, and for many years a merchant in the East Indian trade. The eighth and last child is the Right Hon. Herbert J. Gladstone, M.P., and a rising politician. Altogether, Mr. and

Mrs. Gladstone have, in 1895, twenty-two direct descendants, and seven living children.

Of the statesman's wife much has been written. Her knowledge in all matters of health and nursing, her well-known, constant, and sympathetic care of Mr. Gladstone, her splendid training of a large family, her own gifts of organization, as shown in the establishment and management of several charitable institutions near Hawarden, her kindly energy and cultivated capacity, have contributed greatly to her husband's happiness and prolonged good health. Disraeli, whose wife exercised a very similar beneficial influence upon his career, once said, in Coningsby, that "man conceives fortune, but woman conducts it. It is the spirit of man that says 'I will be great'; but it is the sympathy of woman that usually makes him so." And this is a fact much oftener than is generally understood. Apart from domestic duties, the wife of a political leader has many means of helping her husband, and of smoothing his course. Socially, this is not the case to the same degree as it was during the days of Lady Palmerston and Lady Derby; but, in a different way, her influence may still be very great.

Like Lady Salisbury, Mrs. Gladstone is said to exhibit a cheerful indifference to personal appearance, and to be a most earnest Churchwoman. Like the "Grand Old Man" himself, she possesses a receptive mind, a disposition and keen desire to learn, and a boundless energy. For some years she was the active President of the Women's Liberal Federation of the United Kingdom, a rival organization to the Primrose League, with which the Marchioness of Salisbury is so intimately connected. The home life at Hawarden under such auspices is not difficult to imagine. Simple, cultured, busy, and happy will describe it in one brief sentence. Since the days before the sons went to Eton and Oxford, or were at home for their holidays, and the daughters studying under English, French, and Italian governesses, everybody in the household has had plenty to do from their habitual early rising to the equally usual early bedtime. And since grandchildren have replaced the children, much the same principles of daily life are said to prevail.

As might be expected, it has always been a most intelligent household, as well as a most hospitable house. Profound theology and philosophic thought, Homeric legends, or speculative politics, alternate in conversation with the latest novel or picture, the newest invention, or social topic. There is generally wine on the table at luncheon and dinner, and after dinner comes, very often, a musical interval. Of music Mr. Gladstone was always fond, and a very amusing passage in Lord Malmesbury's diary, about 1850, records that "Gladstone is now quite enthusiastic about negro melodies, singing them with the greatest spirit and enjoyment, never leaving out a verse, and evidently preferring such as 'Camp Town Races.'" The daily mail at Hawarden has, of course, always been very great. Letters of every description, imploring, advising, begging, denouncing, flattering; papers of all sorts; books, pamphlets, magazines, from all parts of the world; flood the castle without ceasing. They come from every kind of person, from sovereigns and peers, from pitmen and weavers, from clergymen and politicians.

Necessarily, a very small portion could be seen by Mr. Gladstone. When in office, he has usually had one or two secretaries looking after and sifting the material. When out of power, his own family managed it for him. Even with this care, his correspondence has been enormous. He has not, even in these modern days, used a typewriter or stenographer. His letters and manuscripts are written in his own hand, with the exception of those official communications which secretaries would write and sign themselves under instructions. Two means of lessening this tremendous burden of work he has resorted to. The one was, at any important period, such as his Golden Wedding, the announcement of his eyesight trouble, or his retirement from public life, to communicate to the papers a general letter of thanks, and an expression of his inability to reply to the letters received. The more ordinary method was by post-card.

This post-card correspondence has been for many years historically voluminous. The most important subjects are dealt with on the large English cards which he despatches, and at one time, when in mourning for his son, he simply had a black border put on, and continued to use this invaluable medium. They were always penned by himself in close, and not very clear, writing.* Partly in order to facilitate this branch of his work, the library at Hawarden is furnished with two desks, one for political matters, and the other for literary affairs. The book-cases in this important room run up nearly to the ceiling, and leave no space for pictures, and very little anywhere for the few busts of eminent contemporaries which are crowded in. Of course, no one chamber will hold the steadily accumulating mass of books which Mr. Gladstone has possessed, and so many of which he deeply loved. Twenty thousand volumes were got into two rooms by stringent economy of space, and then he had to build a fireproof addition to the castle, where they are now mainly stored, under his personal and exact supervision. For he loves his books. Writing in 1890, in the *Nineteenth Century*, he declared that:

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* The author has a characteristic one before him, written to him when acting as Secretary of the Imperial Federation League in Canada, and in response to an enquiry:

"SIR,

"The capacity of our legislative organ is limited. Its hands are very full. The physical power of its members is overtaxed. In the prospective, the first place is held by the great and urgent Irish question. Still more limited are the means, especially as to the future, possessed by a man on the margin of his eightieth year. Under such circumstances, promises should be avoided and deductions restrained. But having stated all this, I can still assure you that I should view with the utmost satisfaction throughout the British Empire that which in the case of Ireland it is my daily care and interest to obtain, a more thorough and substantial union of the different countries and peoples paying allegiance to Her Majesty.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your most faithful servant,

"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"December 17th, 1888."

> "Books are the voices of the dead. They are a main instrument of communion with the vast human procession of the other world. They are the allies of the thought of men. They are, in a certain sense, at enmity with the world. Their work is at least in the two higher compartments of our threefold life. In a room well filled with them no one has felt, or can feel, solitary."

Mr. Gladstone has all through life read deeply, widely, and carefully. When Bright would be reading the latest pamphlet, or Disraeli the newest novel, he would be poring over Milton, or Homer, or some other international classic. He could read in at least a dozen languages, and his wonderful memory enabled him to amass information easily, continuously, and usefully upon a myriad of topics. His library comprises, of course, a very large number of theological and ecclesiastical works, as well as books dealing with mythology and Homeric literature, ancient and modern history, biography and political controversy. And he thoroughly believed in the practice of reading as a beneficent factor in the higher moral life of the individual. He could indeed say frequently and sincerely:

"Rocking on a lazy billow,
With roaming eyes,
Cushioned on a dreamy pillow,
Thou art now wise.
Wake the power within thee sleeping,
Trim the lamp that's in thy keeping,
Thou wilt bless the hour when reaping
Sweet labour's prize."

In a certain kind of conversation Mr. Gladstone excelled. But, like Coleridge and Sidney Smith, Macaulay and Carlyle, it has always been somewhat of a monologue. This came to be the case more and more in his later days, partly because of the interest felt in what he said, partly because of his dislike for direct contradiction, partly because of the immense scope and variety of his information, and the consequent limitations of those surrounding him. Mr. W. E. Forster, writing of a visit paid to him in 1866, observed in a letter: "I have had an interesting day. I went with Gibson to Gladstone at ten, and talked hard with him till almost twelve. He was very free and cordial, and let us talk as much as he lets any one." His marvellous memory, the store of facts he possessed, the intense interest in the topic of the moment, which would often make him forget his listeners and himself, fully explain this trait, and account for the many stories told of him in this connection.

But everything he says is of interest except to some of those who want to talk themselves, and it must be confessed that they usually form a majority of any mixed gathering. Upon one occasion he is said to have discussed fish knives at the dinner table, with quite absorbing devotion to what may be called historic detail. At another time, and during a crisis in the Soudan war, some chance led him to the subject of earthquakes. He at once became intensely interested, and expressed his earnest desire for the report of a commission recently appointed in Java for investigation into the subject; and then went into a more or less scientific inquiry concerning the origin, and causes, and effects, of these phenomena of nature. Another story is told, characteristic, but probably not quite accurate, of an applicant for some important post in India, who went to discuss the matter with the Premier. Mr. Gladstone next day expressed to a mutual friend his appreciation of the rare knowledge of Indian affairs possessed by his visitor. Upon being told this, the latter declared that "I was with him two hours, and hardly spoke a word." The incident, whether true or not, illustrates the overpowering interest felt by the speaker in whatever subject might be before him at the moment. But his fluency and eloquence always made what he said pleasant; and his personality made it, of course, additionally interesting.

Socially, Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone did not possess the popularity of Lord and Lady Palmerston, or of Lord and Lady Granville, and perhaps lacked the *prestige* of Lord and Lady Salisbury. They did not, in fact, entertain to anything like the same extent. But Mr. Gladstone was very fond of a certain form and class of entertainment. For many years he kept up the old-fashioned "breakfast" which, in the earlier part of the century, was so popular. It was at this meal—more like the modern luncheon—that he used to entertain Wordsworth and Bishop Wilberforce, Sir F. H. Doyle and Charles Dickens. At Hawarden, during certain seasons of the year, there would also be a running succession of guests, all more or less distinguished. In this connection, Mr. Hayward gives in his Memoirs a characteristic note from Mr. Gladstone—then Premier— and dated October 17th, 1883:

> "I hope you will come down and see us while we have yet some leaves on the trees. Attorney-General comes to-morrow; Lacaita a day or two after; Herbert (Gladstone), reeking of Leeds, Monday or Tuesday; the Spencers I hope are in the offing; the Derbys are booked for the 31st. Now you have a bill of fare, pray choose your dish. I ought to mention that young Newcastle is asked to meet the Derbys."

There were certain periods when London was divided socially by intense party feelings, and, when that happened, a Liberal leader would almost necessarily be limited in his entertainments and social interests. One of these curious occurrences was in 1878, when Lord Beaconsfield was at the height of his popularity, and Mr. Gladstone in the opposite depths, as a result of his bitter, unceasing, crusade against the Conservative chieftain. In many parts of the higher circles of London he was simply execrated, and there were a great many people who would neither meet him nor sit at dinner with him. In and about 1888, during the Home Rule period, he was almost boycotted in a similar section of what is called society; and as the list of Gladstonian Liberals at that time included a comparatively limited number of persons in distinguished social position, it has been stated by a competent observer that it taxed the resources of the most accomplished hostess in London to arrange for him a dinner party of desirable people.

It is not difficult to understand this. The feeling, of course, did not last long; but when the great Whig magnates, such as the Dukes of Devonshire, and Westminster, and Bedford, and many another Peer of high rank, found themselves obliged to leave the leader whom they had so long followed, the situation naturally became strained, and social relations awkward, for the time being. A somewhat similar state of things existed in 1832, when it is said the social world was as greatly divided as the political world. It was then a most unusual circumstance to see the Duke of Wellington and Earl Grey at the same table, or even in the same drawing-room. But these feelings of bitterness soon die out, though, no doubt, very strong at the time. Of course, it was never possible for Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone to equal their political rivals in entertaining. The modest little house which they maintained in London during official periods could not compare with, for instance, Lord Salisbury's magnificent mansion in Arlington Street—a palace where the great rooms are pre-eminently fitted for political receptions and social festivities. And so in many other cases.

But the more modest mode of life probably suited Mr. Gladstone better, as it did his moderate—though sufficient—income. With many people it increased his popularity. They liked his plain name, his quiet domestic life, his family, who did not seek high alliances, his churchgoing practice on Sundays, his fondness for cutting down trees, his devotion to his wife, and her well-known care for him and his health. Mr. Gladstone's fancy for tree-cutting is famous. But, contrary to the general impression, he never felled a tree at Hawarden for mere exercise. They were tried carefully, sometimes in family council, sometimes under the consideration of visitors, such as Mr. Ruskin or Sir John Millais, and then only felled for reasons of taste and beauty, or in the interest of neighbouring trees.

Domestic incidents in the life of a popular leader are always interesting, and in recent years two family events occurred in connection with Mr. Gladstone which aroused considerable public attention. The one was the marriage of his daughter, in February, 1886, to the Rev. Harry Drew, while the other was his own Golden Wedding celebration. Miss Gladstone's marriage took place at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, and was attended by many distinguished guests. The family, of course, were largely represented, and amongst others present were the Prince and Princess of Wales, Prince George of Wales, Lord Rosebery, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Childers, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Lady Spencer, Lady Harcourt, and Lady Granville. Mr. Gladstone gave the bride away, and it is hardly necessary to say that the presents were very numerous and representative of a wide circle of friends.

In July, 1888, a presentation was made to Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone at Spencer House, in London, in commemoration of their entering upon the fiftieth year of married life. The gifts consisted of a portrait of Mr. Gladstone, painted by Holl; a portrait of Mrs. Gladstone, painted by Herkomer; and three massive silver cups. The proceedings were private, but amongst those present were Lord Rosebery, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Morley, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Stansfeld, and Mr. Childers. The following address was presented, signed, of course, by those named, and by over a hundred other friends or former colleagues:

> "We wish to be allowed, some of us as former colleagues of one, and all as constant friends of both of you, to share in the commemoration of this happy anniversary. Along with multitudes of our countrymen of all sorts and conditions, we offer you our cordial congratulations on the long span of faithful and unbroken companionship which to-day brings in a special manner to our minds.
>
> "As one of you has known no loftier duty than the furtherance of national well-being, so the other has no more cherished desire than to lighten the burden and to smooth the path in this high task. To few is it given, as it is to you, to feel, in looking back through so many years, that amid vast and ceaseless public labours, alike in the hours of triumph and of discouragement, you have never failed abundantly to realize all the unclouded blessings of the home."

In the succeeding year, the Golden Wedding proper was elaborately celebrated. On July 25th, 1889, it was exactly half a century since the event, and not merely the entrance upon the anniversary year. Amongst other incidents marking the date was a great reception held, a few days later, by the National Liberal Club, and the presentation of an Album containing an elaborate address and the beautiful special designs of several prominent artists. Most of the leading Liberals of the day were present, and the address was read by Lord Oxenbridge. It was very congratulatory, naturally eulogistic, and somewhat political.

But, towards the conclusion, it paid a very sincere and earnest tribute to Mrs. Gladstone, "in whom, throughout long years of effort and of labour, you have found not only the dearest of companions, but the most devoted and efficient of helpmates, whose life has been given to works of love and charity among her fellow-creatures, and but for whose self-consecration to the service of her husband and her children your own public work must have been so seriously fettered and limited." Mr. Gladstone's reply was brief, but eloquent. He spoke of the noble calling which the service of the people was, and had always seemed to him to be. "What opportunities of good to our fellow-creatures it has opened; what cheering and pleasant anticipations of the future; what bright recollections of the past; how all its difficulties, and the pain attending upon its contentions, seem to vanish in the distance, and to become light as dust when compared with our conviction that the substantial nature of the objects that we have in view is associated with the highest, or with very high, interests of mankind."

The day itself had been celebrated at home by a family gathering and the receipt of innumerable letters, containing good wishes and congratulations. Perhaps the most graceful, if not the most interesting, was the following from Cardinal Manning:

"MY DEAR MRS. GLADSTONE:

"The last time we met you said, 'I do not forget old days.' And truly I can say so, too. Therefore, in the midst of all who are congratulating you on the fiftieth anniversary of your home life, I cannot be silent.

"I have watched you both out on the sea of public tumults from my quiet shores. You know how nearly I have agreed in William's political career, especially in his Irish policy of the last twenty years. And I have seen also your works of charity for the people, in which, as you know, I heartily share with you. There are few who keep such a jubilee as yours; and how few of our old friends and companions now survive! We have had a long climb up those eighty steps—for even you are not far behind—and I hope we shall not 'break the pitcher at the fountain.' I wonder at your activity and endurance of weather. May every blessing be with you both to the end. Believe me,

"Always yours affectionately,

"HENRY E. CARD. MANNING."

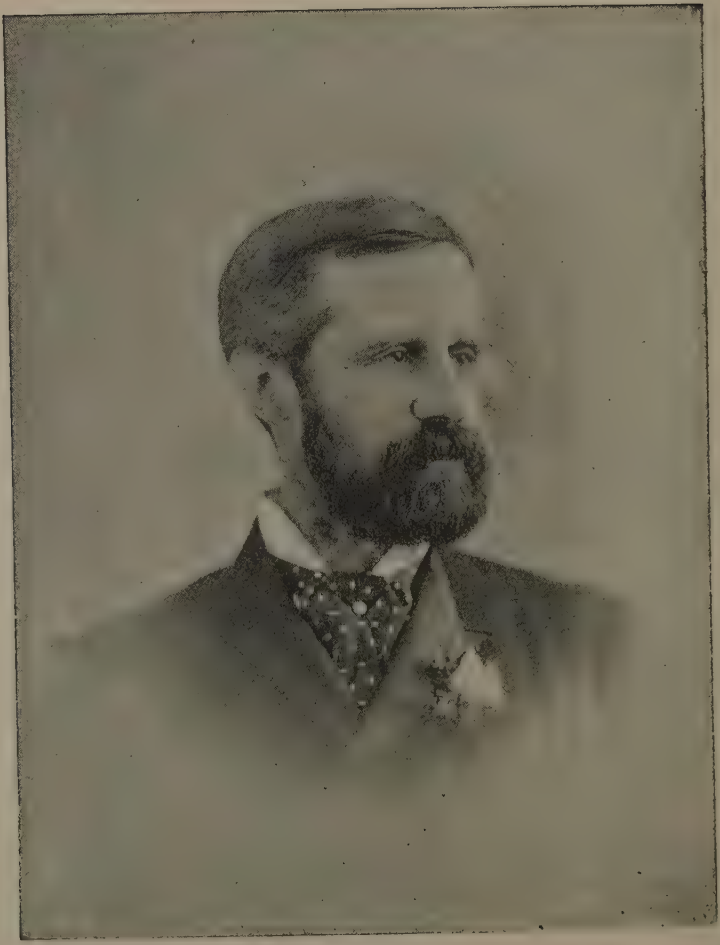
A striking trait in Mr. Gladstone's character has been his permanent and prevailing courtesy. It was innate, delicate, minute. His manners were of the old-fashioned school, stately and urbane, never condescending, yet always modest. His politeness to correspondents was something wonderful. Upon one occasion a young woman at Wigan wrote the Prime Minister a letter on his birthday, and enclosed a bookmark on which she had worked the words, "The Bible our Guide." She was an invalid, suffering from consumption, and Mr. Gladstone at once replied, by forwarding some suitable gifts, and writing a simple note, which concluded with the wish that "the guidance which you are good enough to desire on my behalf may avail you fully on every step of that journey in which, if I do not precede, I cannot but shortly follow you."

But the characteristics of such a man are naturally varied, and in this newspaper age are pretty well known. He has toiled hard, and concentrated his thought to great purpose and in many directions, during a long life. But he has always included relaxation and rest amongst the imperative necessities of a busy man's existence. And, although his holiday exercise and recreation would be to another man the most intense labour, he seems to have found the mere change of action and thought a factor in promoting health and strength. He has always been fond of walking, and likes to talk to a friend, or listen to good music, or play a game of chess. He used to frequently attend concerts, and occasionally the theatre, when in London. He has all his life detested social "crushes," and, with Mrs. Gladstone, has carefully avoided them, or, indeed, anything else which might prevent regular sleep—outside of Parliamentary duties or interests. He possessed also that useful faculty of being able to fall asleep, and enjoy a brief and beneficial nap, at a moment's notice.

Some one has said, with a certain degree of truth, that he had not a little of the woman in his nature. If impulsiveness, and a warm and sympathetic heart, a fervently religious disposition, and an impressible temperament, are feminine qualities, the statement is certainly accurate. He could take an interest in all kinds of things. In 1852, for instance, he took part in the Queen's famous Fancy Dress Ball, at Buckingham Palace, and appeared as a judge of the time of Charles II., dressed in "a velvet coat turned up with blue satin, and ruffles, and a collar of old point lace." In Mr. Hayward's correspondence, during 1882, are several references by the Premier to Mrs. Langtry and the stage, and, in one letter, dated October 18th, he declares that "she has worked hard, and I am glad she is well paid. She will come back from America a millionaire." Though he enjoyed a good laugh, and had a certain sense of humour, it was of a peculiar nature. Much ordinary wit he did not appreciate, and personal or ill-natured stories he intensely disliked. Jokes with him were as rare as epigrams. Lord William Pitt Lennox, in his Reminiscences, gives one of the very few which have been recorded. It was in the form of a definition of a word often used in political circles: "Deputation," said Mr. Gladstone, "is a noun of multitude that signifies many, but does not signify much."

But similar reminiscences might be indefinitely extended. Upon the whole, Mr. Gladstone appears to have enjoyed a home life and a domestic happiness which few can have equalled amongst his contemporaries, and none excelled, in the absence of misfortune, of serious illness, and of family faults. It has also been a lesson to the people in what constitutes a cultured religious home, and has shown to the world that a man may be a great political leader, and yet remain a Christian gentleman, and that a woman can hold a lofty place, and yet prove a devoted wife and mother.

MR. GLADSTONE READING THE LESSONS IN HAWARDEN CHURCH.



JOHN CAMPBELL HAMILTON-GORDON, 7TH EARL OF ABERDEEN,

Governor-General of Canada, 1893.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LATER DAYS IN A MEMORABLE LIFE.

WHEN the New Year opened in 1894, the tide of agitation against the House of Lords was in full and fiery action. So far as the Radicals and other naturally indignant Liberals could go in denunciation and invective, they went, though without any very visible effect. The Upper House had thrown out the Home Rule Bill, and successfully amended the Parish Councils Bill, and there, for the present, the matter had to rest. Concurrently with this vague and angry feeling in the Liberal ranks came various disquieting rumours as to Mr. Gladstone's health. His eyesight trouble seemed to be getting worse, and there were reports of his resignation upon more than one occasion.

Health to him during a long life had, indeed, proved a wonderful friend—a pronounced factor in his success. There does not seem to have ever been any serious defect in his constitution, and, with the exception of an occasional break-down of brief duration from overwork and pressure, he had never known a serious illness. Sir Andrew Clark, who was his physician from 1864 to his own death in 1893, tells us that Mr. Gladstone, when he first consulted him, was "the most wonderfully strong and active man, both mentally and physically, that I ever examined." But even in 1864 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he then was, "had a very strongly defined 'arcus senilis' in both eyes." Dr. Clark goes on to say that this trouble or defect is not necessarily a sign of decay. And certainly it does not appear to have affected Mr. Gladstone until he was verging on eighty-five years of age.

On the 1st of March, and amid many uncertain rumours, Mr. Gladstone made an important speech in the House of Commons. No one knew that it was to be his last utterance in the legislative halls which had so long been filled with his eloquent tones, and permeated with his personal powers of controversy, leadership, and legislation. Like Disraeli, he one day appeared and made a speech in the ordinary course, and the next morning his place was vacant. Upon this occasion, he dealt almost entirely with the House of Lords, and the amendments to the Parish Councils Bill, which he felt compelled to accept, rather than sacrifice the measure. Part of the succeeding day was spent by Mrs. Gladstone and himself at Windsor, where his resignation was submitted to the Queen and accepted, and the Earl of Rosebery sent for upon his advice. To the public generally, the event was a startling one. People had somehow come to look upon the Premier's health as a secondary consideration. So intense was his vitality, and so unceasing his activity, that old age was somehow disregarded in the popular conception of the "Grand Old Man" and his future work. Expressions of regret at his retirement, and sympathy with his ill-health, immediately commenced to pour in upon the veteran, while the press in every part of the country, and in every civilized State, commented upon his character and career. Many newspapers abroad seemed to consider the Home Rule failure as the main cause of his retirement.

The *Times* dealt at length with his character and career, and told the story of John Bright and the lady who, upon one occasion, expressed that vehement animosity which Mr. Gladstone so often aroused amongst his opponents. "Madam," said Mr. Bright, interrupting the torrent of feminine invective, "let me counsel you to take your little boy to see Mr. Gladstone, in order that when he is an old man he may tell his children and his grandchildren that he has seen the greatest Englishman he is ever likely to look upon." Perhaps, in later days, Bright might not have made the remark; but without entering upon comparisons, the *Times* proceeded in a really remarkable eulogy:

> "His personal record is unquestionably unique. No other man has been four times Prime Minister of England. No other man can reckon sixty years since he entered the service of the Crown, and more than sixty years in the service of the State. No other man has led the House of Commons and actively discharged the duties of First Minister of the Crown in his eighty-fifth year. No contemporary has left so broad and indelible a mark on the

whole policy of his country, or has exercised so commanding or so abiding an influence on legislation, administration, and debate. Above all, no man of his time, and few men of any time, have displayed to the world so puissant and versatile a personality, a character so compacted of high aims and lofty ambitions, rare personal dignity, remarkable charm, and a manner combining antique courtesy with a sensibility never out of date, universality of intellectual interests, absorbing and indefatigable industry, unbounded enthusiasm, passionate earnestness of conviction and action, and extraordinary powers of expression little abated in the fineness of their temper, and little dimmed in the brilliancy of their display at an age far beyond the allotted span of man."

Few leaders have ever received such a tribute from so potent an adversary as the *Times* had proved itself to be. But almost everywhere it was the same. The stormy political past was absorbed and forgotten in the present and immediate fact of the departure of a great and historic personality from the national stage. Mr. Chamberlain, in a speech at Birmingham, referred to the closing of the active public life of "the greatest Parliamentary orator and statesman of our time," and to the shock which it had been to him personally. The Duke of Devonshire, who as Lord Hartington had been in such intimate relations with Mr. Gladstone during a prolonged period, spoke at length upon the subject of his retirement at a meeting in Somerset. And when Parliament met on the 12th of March, the further tributes paid to the great leader were numerous, and apparently sincere. Lord Salisbury, while deprecating the introduction of controversial elements, declared they could "all pay a passing tribute to one of the most brilliant figures who had served the State since Parliamentary government in this country began, and also to the resolution, the courage, the self-discipline which he had exhibited down to the latest period of the longest public life ever granted to any English statesman." In the Commons, Mr. Balfour said that every member of the House owed the late Prime Minister a debt of public and personal gratitude on account of his having maintained through great Parliamentary and social changes the high standard of public life which he had learned to admire in a different age.

Punch, which so often hits the national nail on the head, and keeps in such close touch with public opinion in its political cartoons, followed in a representation of Mr. Gladstone as an aged knight taking off his armour, and hanging up his sword. The accompanying words were very striking:

"War-worn, but yet unbroken, straight and strong,
We hoped he yet should head the charge for long,
The star of battle and the theme of song.

It scarcely seemed Old Time himself had force
This many laurelled champion to unhorse,
Shiver his lance, or stay his conquering course.

From clustering jet to scattered silver went
The hero's locks, yet age his frame unbent,
His courage unimpaired, his strength unspent.

Meanwhile there had been little real change in the reconstructed Government. Lord Rosebery took the Presidency of the Council in addition to the Premiership, and Lord Kimberley assumed charge of the Foreign Office. Mr. Herbert J. Gladstone was promoted from the post of Under-Secretary at the Home Office, and became First Commissioner of Works and a Privy Councillor. Sir William Harcourt retained his position at the Exchequer, and became for the first time leader of the House of Commons. Shortly after his assumption of the Premiership, Lord Rosebery addressed his Parliamentary supporters, and, of course, referred to the departure of their late chief from the scene of his life work. "When you return to that House," said he, "you will miss the central figure, that sublime and pathetic presence that enriched and ennobled, not merely the Treasury Bench, but the House of Commons." The Lords, however, constituted the main subject of his speech, and in vague, but forcible, language he denounced the present position of the Upper House as an anomaly and a danger.

On March 17th, Mr. Gladstone addressed a long and interesting letter to Sir John Cowan, the President for so many years of the Liberal Association of Midlothian. That body had sent him an Address, in which they urged that he should continue, even in retirement, to represent their historic constituency. He did not expressly decline to do so, but in his reply took occasion to briefly review the past, and to look forward a little into the future. A couple of months after the sending of this letter, which the *Times* described as a stately and pathetic farewell, Mr. Gladstone attended, on May 4th, a meeting held in London for the purpose of promoting a memorial to Sir Andrew Clark, who had just died. About the same time he made public a card of thanks to those who had sent him almost innumerable letters of condolence and sympathy upon the trouble with his eyes, and on June 23rd intimated to Sir John Cowan a final decision not to seek re-election to the House of Commons.

Towards the end of July, Mr. Gladstone acknowledged another invitation to visit the United States, but pointed out that there would still be two months before the surgical treatment of his eye for cataract was concluded, and before he could even hope for the restoration of practical and useful vision. It may be added here that the operation was eventually successful. In August he responded to an address presented by the National Liberal Federation, and signed by the presidents of all its affiliated societies. Writing to Mr. Spence Watson, the head of the whole organization, and, by the way, an intense Radical, he expressed the earnest hope that the future might be marked "by the same practical tone, the same union of firmness with moderation, the same regard for individual freedom, the same desire to harmonize the old with the new, and the same sound principles of policy and administration" as had characterized the past. During November, and presumably as a sort of recreation, Mr. Gladstone published a translation of Horace, as to which the *Times* declared that "the reader will find many eloquent lines, and much that he can unreservedly admire. If he finds a few shortcomings also, let him wrestle a fall with Horace on his own account, while some candid friend marks the result."

Meantime the terrible massacres in Armenia had horrified the world, as had the Bulgarian atrocities of twenty years before. If Mr. Gladstone had been a slightly younger man, it is not impossible to imagine him once more arming for the fray, and taking the field against "the unspeakable Turk." Many even expected him to do so in these declining years of a prolonged life. As it was, he commenced, at the end of 1894, to take an active interest in the matter, and on December 14th wrote a brief letter to the chairman of a meeting in London, expressive of the hope that the British Government would act up to its responsibilities under the terms of the Cyprus Convention, and insist upon the most searching investigation and punishment of the criminals. On the 29th of the month he celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday at Hawarden, and was in receipt of hundreds of congratulatory telegrams and letters. He also received during the day a deputation of Armenian Christians from London and Paris, and made a strong, vigorous speech in reply to their address. The history of Turkey Mr. Gladstone declared to have been a sad and painful one. During his own lifetime he had seen its empire reduced by one-half because of its misdeeds, and "the great record written by the hand of Almighty God against its injustice, lust, and most abominable cruelty." If these latest atrocities were established, it should be inscribed in letters of iron upon the records of the world that such a Government "is a disgrace to Mahomet the Prophet, a disgrace to civilization, and a disgrace to mankind."

Shortly before this signal protest against despotism in the East, he had contributed a letter to the literature of a fierce contest, in the London School Board elections, between those who favoured religious education in the schools and those who did not. His statement of opinion was certainly explicit :

> "I believe the piety, prudence, and kindness of the teacher may do a great deal in conveying the cardinal truths of our divine religion to the minds of pupils without stumbling, or causing them to stumble, on what are termed denominational difficulties. . . . In my opinion, an undenominational system of religion, framed by, or under the authority of, the State is a moral monster. The State has no charter from heaven, such as may belong to the Church, or the individual conscience. It would, I think, be better for the State to limit itself to giving secular instruction, which, of course, is no complete education, than rashly to adventure upon such a system."

While Mr. Gladstone was thus pursuing the even tenor of his way, indulging here and there in some agreeable controversy, helping forward some agitation against oppressive government, or carrying out some literary undertaking which, in another and younger man, would alone have seemed a considerable achievement, the Rosebery Government was growing gradually weaker, until it stood apparently shivering upon the brink of defeat or dissolution. In July, 1895, defeat came upon some minor question, and the Marquess of Salisbury was called upon to form his third administration. He did so, and at once appealed to the country. His Ministry, in point of recognized individual ability, was probably the most powerful ever formed in England. With himself as Premier, he had in the Cabinet, Mr. Balfour, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Henry James, the Marquess of Lansdowne, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Ritchie, Viscount Cross, Sir M. E. Hicks-Beach, and Sir Mathew White Ridley.

The result of the contest which followed was phenomenal. No such majority has ever been given in English history. The Conservatives had 341 supporters returned, the Liberal-Unionists 70, while the Liberals, Irish, and Labour men, combined, only numbered 259. The Government thus had a majority of 152, and Lord Rosebery had received a most crushing defeat. It is useless to suggest reasons, though two or three are clear enough. The absence of Mr. Gladstone's great personality, the lack of his enthusiasm, and experience, and powerful eloquence, must have told strongly amongst the rank and file of the party. For the first time in several decades, an election had been fought without Mr. Gladstone's ringing voice and magnetic presence being on the side of the Liberals; without his white plume waving in the front of the fight, strengthening the weak and cheering the courageous; without the *prestige* of his wonderful popularity amongst the masses of his party, and with the floating and uncertain vote which always exists. The collapse of the agitation against the House of Lords was another cause. The policy proposed was too vague and the results too intangible for public appreciation, and, above all, the majority of the people of England were opposed to Home Rule, and rather approved the action of the Lords than otherwise.

When the elections were pending, Mr. Gladstone wrote his last political Manifesto in the form of a letter to Sir John Cowan, bidding farewell to his Midlothian constituents. This document may be very fairly compared with his first Manifesto, addressed to the electors of Newark on August 4th, 1832. A world of political and material change lies between, and, as the one has been given in its proper place, let the other also speak for itself:

"HAWARDEN CASTLE, July 1st, 1895.

"MY DEAR SIR JOHN COWAN:

"The impending dissolution brings into its practical and final form the prospective farewell which I addressed last year to the constituency of Midlothian. I now repeat it, with sentiments of gratitude and attachment for the treatment I have received during fifteen happy years which can never be effaced.

"I then ventured to express my good wishes for the excellent candidate who aspired to represent the county on principles conformable to the striking manifestations of 1880 and subsequent years. Though in regard to public affairs many things are disputable, there are some which belong to history, and which have passed out of the region of contention. It is, for example, as I conceive, beyond question that the century now expiring has exhibited, since the close of its first quarter, a period of unexampled activity, both in legislative and administrative changes; that these changes, taken in the mass, have been in the direction of true and most beneficial progress; that both the condition and the franchises of the people have made, in relation to the former state of things, a most extraordinary advance; that of these reforms a most overwhelming proportion have been effected by the direct action of the Liberal party, or of statesmen such as Peel and Canning, ready to meet odium and forfeit power for the public good; and that in every one of fifteen Parliaments the people of Scotland have decisively expressed their convictions in favour of this wise, temperate, and in every way remarkable policy.

"The Metropolitan County of Midlothian has now for a long time given the support of her weighty example. As one earnestly desiring that she may retain in the future all the honour that she has won in the past, I trust she may continue to use her great influence as beseems her position, and may, in the coming and in many future Parliaments, lead the people of Scotland in their deliberately chosen course.

"Offering to you, personally, once more, the assurance of my highest esteem and regard, I remain,

"My dear Sir John Cowan,
"Sincerely yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Opinions will differ upon, and history may dispute, Mr. Gladstone's claim to paramount greatness in some of the things which his more intense admirers consider unquestionable in the public career thus finally closed. But upon what may be called his versatility of excellence, the past and future sentiment of the world will agree. Mr. Gladstone studied, and loved, religion, until he could have achieved with ease the loftiest of ecclesiastical positions. Upon one occasion he took Bishop Wilberforce's place at a moment's notice, and addressed the divinity students of King's College with beautiful eloquence upon "the righteousness which is by faith." As mere holiday tasks, he mastered the writings of Chrysostom, analyzed the poems of Homer, and translated Horace. As an orator, he was equally at home in the intricacies of a new budget, or in an impromptu lecture on cookery; in an address to peasants from a third-class railway carriage, or a critical dissertation upon Sir Walter Scott; in a speech to the paupers of St. Pancras Workhouse, or an earnest address upon the claims of Eastern research and Babylonic exploration; in an effort to promote garden cultivation before the Hawarden Horticultural Society, or in addressing a gathering of Nonconformist divines at the City Temple; in delivering an appropriate and effective eulogy upon a dead opponent, presenting some great and far-reaching Parliamentary proposal, or in appealing to vast popular audiences upon some political question.

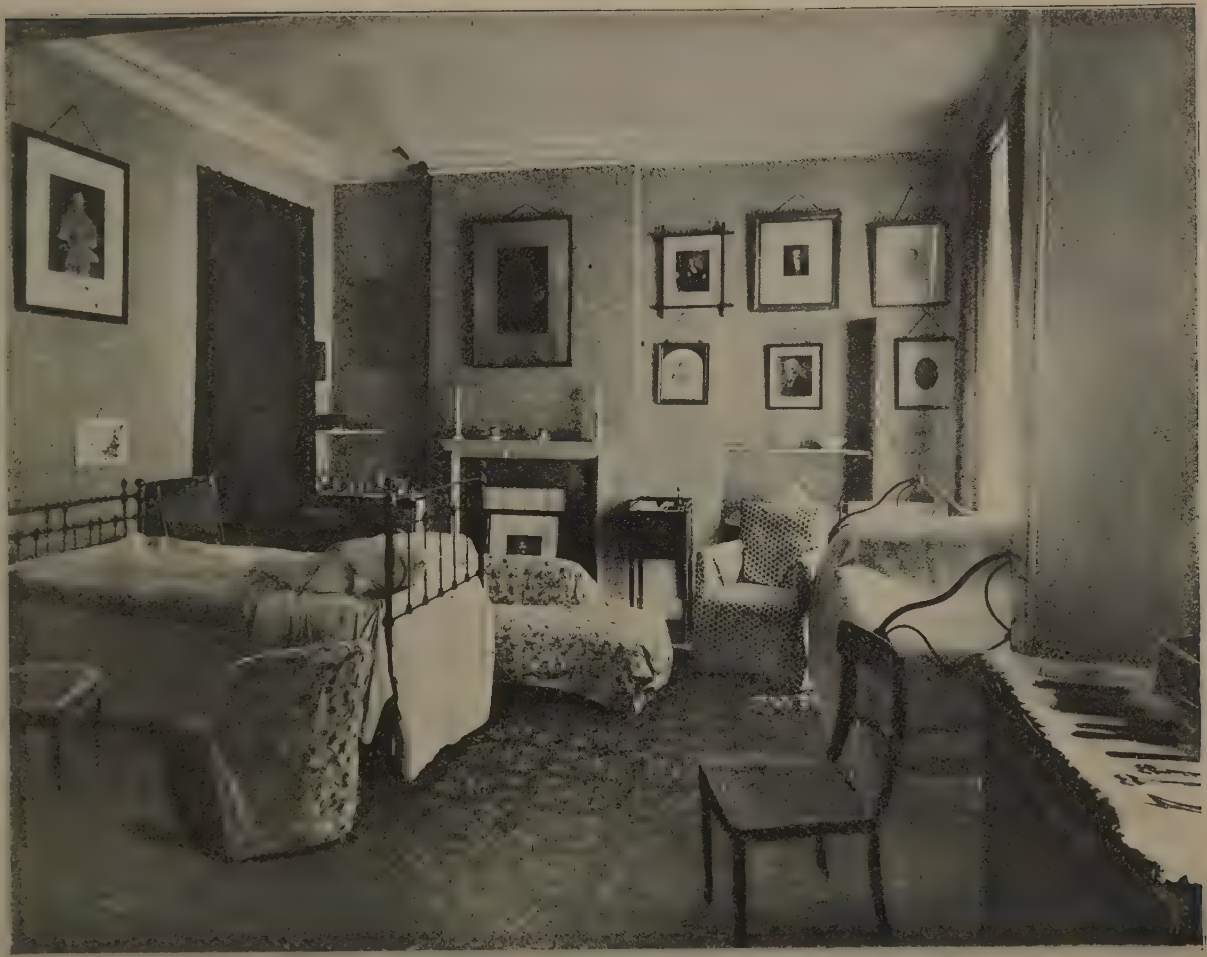
As an author and speaker, he has dealt with almost every conceivable subject. Many volumes might be filled with his opinions upon matters of import to future generations, and whether in harmony with individual, or party, or national sentiment, or in antagonism to present or prospective opinion, these thoughts are none the less worthy of attention, and his views of substantial and perhaps increasing value. Indeed, as political feelings and national questions fade into history, such utterances must become of greater importance. And this apart from passing eloquence, or even literary skill. They were the products of a thoughtful mind, an intensely active intellect, a ripe and ripening experience. Nor will this value be lessened by the fact of his earnest religious principle and the silver thread of sincerity which, in this connection, runs through almost everything he has expressed.

Well, indeed, is it for a great country when it has statesmen willing and eager to teach, as well as to practise, the lessons of a higher morality and a true Christian culture. Such men may make great political mistakes, and may, during the passions of an excited period, be greatly hated by the classes, or be temporarily distrusted by the masses. But, in the end, character and high intention will triumph over political error or administrative folly. And the most vigorous opponent will probably admit in Mr. Gladstone the possession of those two great attributes. His life proves it, and this volume will be of little interest, and no value, unless it affords some faint indication of the genuine fervour and enthusiasm which marked his career, the love of liberty which permeated his policy, the devotion to religion and worship which distinguished his every action and effort.

Greatness in statesmanship is a peculiar phrase, and one which can be manipulated to suit any political view or historical prejudice. Canon Liddon is stated to have once said, when driving round the slopes of Benvoirlich, that "the mountain reminds me of Mr. Gladstone. We shall never know how great he is while we are with him. After he is gone, we shall begin to discover how vastly he towers above all the men of his generation." And that career has, beyond all doubt, been a great one—great in its length and influence, great in its legislative ability, great in its popularity and power, great in its oratorical faculties, great in its intellectual activities, great in its Christian characteristics. These facts stand true, despite some spots upon the record, or possible stains upon his statesmanship. Man is so very human that of few, indeed, can it be truly said, as it can of him:

"And when he dies, he leaves a lofty name,
A light, a landmark, on the cliffs of fame."

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.



THE ROOM IN WHICH MR. GLADSTONE DIED.

Photograph by Watnough Webster.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE BATTLE ENDED—REST ACHIEVED.

DURING the last three years of his eventful and crowded life, Mr. Gladstone seemed to stand above the political turmoil and struggle of the time like an embodiment of history. Every action was noted, every line written or word spoken was cherished, every new exhibition of physical energy or power for mental work was watched with wonder by the public and the press of the civilized world. The great leader was placed upon a pinnacle above faction and party spirit—above hostile criticism of any kind. Slowly but surely the sentiment developed which only comes after death in the case of lesser men, and his career and character came to be judged with that appreciation which loses sight of individual prejudices and political partialities in view of the final turning over of the last page in the history of a life. In the words of Browning, people throughout the English-speaking world, at least, came to regard him as:

> "One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;
> Never doubted clouds would break;
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
> Held: we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

Occasionally, and at critical moments, the affection of his old followers would break out, and their respect for his qualities and career be shown in suggestions of a return to the Premiership; a leadership in some great agitation, such as that on the Armenian question; or perhaps the resumption of the Liberal chieftaincy. But although much speculation prevailed as to his opinions upon Lord Rosebery's brief adminstration of affairs, and his views regarding such questions as the Foreign policy of the Government, the Local Veto Bill of 1895, the Welsh Disestablishment proposals, and similar subjects of party strife, Mr. Gladstone maintained upon the whole an absolute and unbroken silence. The one exception was the Eastern question, so far as it was connected with the unfortunate Armenians. This position of neutrality in political matters helped greatly in the development and maintainance of that unique place which he filled in the eyes of the world at the time of his passing away.

It was natural that the last years of a leader whose life had been so permeated with the study of Christianity in its precepts, practice, and consequently indirect presentation to the minds of the masses, should be more or less devoted to continued work and thought upon the general theme. Hence his publication of an edition of Bishop Butler's works, with elaborate and scholarly annotations. It was a project involving great labour—the index being only framed after a close study of the volumes, and upon a special plan. The notes showed wide learning and research, and the close tissue of the text was clearly analyzed and revised. Hence the contribution of a most striking and important article, early in 1895, to the *People's Pictorial Bible*, edited by the Rev. Dr. Lorimer of Boston, and in which the veteran writer spoke of the Scriptures as being the centre of a great conflict now raging and hereafter to increase, and declared that "vast and essential as is the living agency by which the work of the Gospel is to be carried on, and to which indeed it was first committed by the Saviour,that living agency is for the present broken up into factions which seem to maintain or even to consolidate themselves on their separate bases, and no one of which commands the adhesion of so much as a moiety of the entire body. But there is no division—at least there is no great and vital division—among Christians as to the canon of the older Testament. As to the testament of the Gospel, or the New Covenant, there is no division at all." And then he described the dominance of Christianity and its general application to the human race in words which, coming from such a central figure in the history of this century, must remain of living and lasting importance. "The religion of Christ is for mankind the greatest of all phenomena, the greatest of all facts. It is the dominant religion of the inhabitants of this planet in at least two important respects. It commands the largest number of professing adherents. If we estimate the population of the globe at 1,400 millions (and some would state a higher figure), between 400 and 500 of these, or one-third of the whole, are professing Christians, and at every point of the circuit the question is not one of losing ground, but of gaining it. The fallacy which accepted the vast population of China as Buddhists in the mass has been exploded, and it is plain that no other religion approaches the numerical strength of Christianity; doubtful, indeed, whether there be any which reaches one-half of it. The second of the particulars now under view is, perhaps, even more important. Christianity is the religion in the command of whose professors is lodged a proportion of power far exceeding its superiority of numbers, and this power is both moral and material. In the area of controversy it can hardly be said to have a serious antagonist. Force, secular or physical, is accumulated in the hands of Christians in a proportion absolutely overwhelming, and the accumulation of influence is not less remarkable than that of force. This is not surprising, for all the elements of influence have their home within the Christian precinct. The art, the literature, the systematized industry, invention and commerce—in one word the power of the world—are almost wholly Christian. In Christendom alone there seems to lie an inexhaustible energy of world-wide expansion. The nations of Christendom are everywhere arbiters of the fate of non-Christian nations."

It was this deep feeling in religious matters which makes it as impossible to consider Mr. Gladstone's life apart from Christian thought and progress as to consider Tennyson apart from poetry, Darwin from science, or Beaconsfield from Imperialism. Not long before the issue of the works mentioned above, he had published "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" (1890, with a second edition in 1892) and a "Commentary on the Psalter" in 1895. But these and other works, whether of recent or long past years, were but the public embodiment of his own heartfelt experience and belief. "In some of his latest letters to me," said Lady Aberdeen in Ottawa on the day of his death, "when speaking of a certain political question, he wrote: 'What we want is more prayer, more prayer.'" In this age of flippant unbelief, studied skepticism, or absolute indifference, such sincerity and earnestness of faith in a man of acute intellect and intensely busy life is not only a great tribute to the force and truth of Christianity, but in conjunction with his personal character, habits and teachings constitutes the career of Mr. Gladstone one of the great moral forces of the century. And in this, perhaps, there lies one of his chiefest claims to greatness.

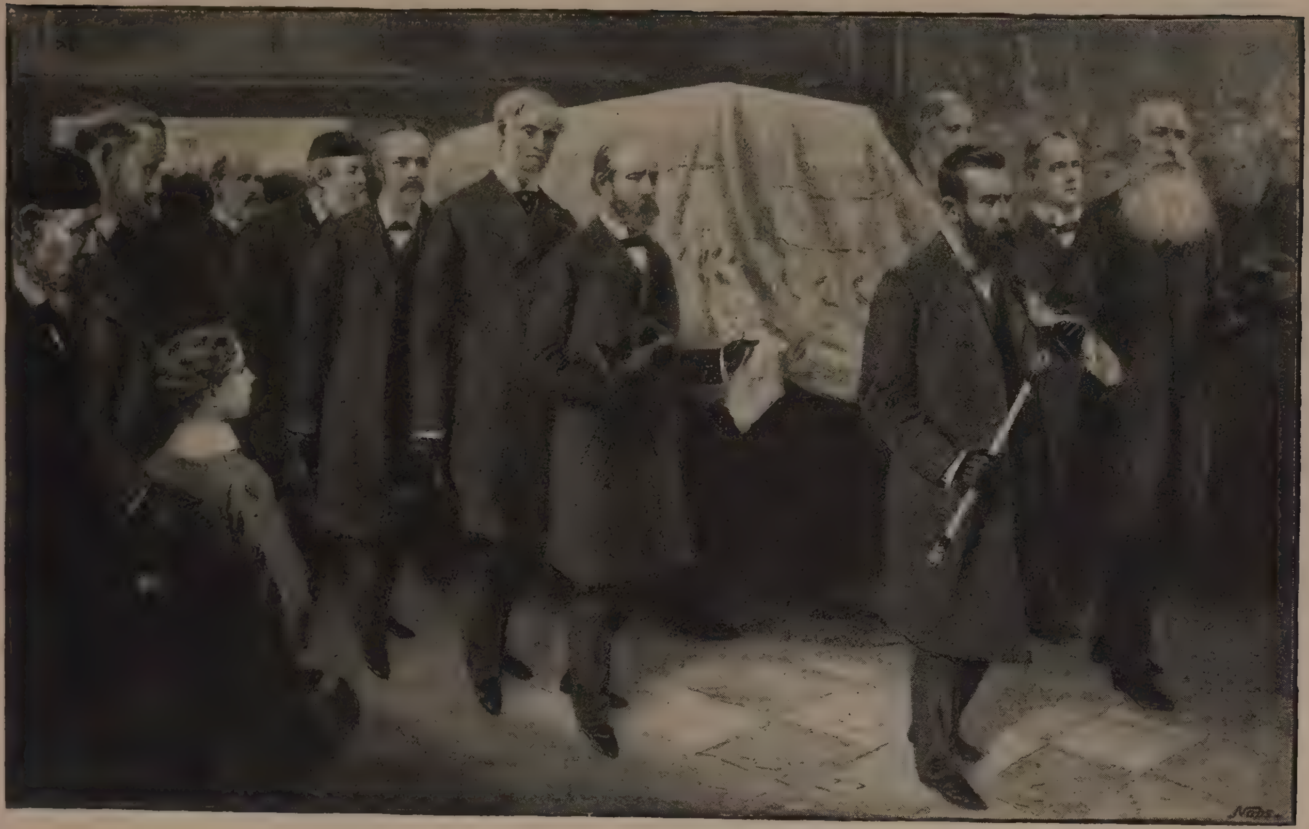
Meanwhile he never lost interest in the multitudinous affairs of State as well as Church. In October, 1895, he wrote to the press on the necessity of assisting Guy's Hospital to meet the deficit in its income caused by the fall in the value of land, and pointed out that this misfortune to a noble charitable institution arose from a cause which had benefited the community at large—cheap wheat and cheap bread. The case, he declared, "appeals not only to the sense of kindness, but to the sense of shame." He lived to see the matter taken up during the Diamond Jubilee period and many thousand pounds subscribed under the auspices and influence of the Prince of Wales. In May, 1895, he wrote a letter upon the Anglican Orders' question, in which he expressed reverence and appreciation for the attitude of Pope Leo XIII. in directing an inquiry into the whole subject. Of this letter the *Times* spoke as being "instinct throughout with the spirit of charity and devotion to the Christian cause." During August of the succeeding year Mr. Gladstone spoke at the annual show of the Hawarden Horticultural Society and referred to his personal enjoyment of rural life and the desirability of increasing its attractiveness and remunerativeness. Then followed his famous speech upon the Armenian question on September 24th. On March 15th, 1897, he wrote the following much-discussed letter, which was first published in the German *Neue Freie Presse:*

"I have, apart from other serious obstacles, especially indisposition, felt a great difficulty in answering your courteous letter, for I cannot suppose, even under the assurance you give me, that Germany has the smallest care to know my sentiments on the Eastern Question in its present astounding phase. Though I have an immense admiration for the great German people, my acquaintance with their press has led me to believe that they have generally condemned my words and deeds, nor can I on this account feel either surprise or displeasure. I have not been permitted to profit by the obscurity of my retirement, and have at last been compelled to send to the press in London a statement of my views upon the Eastern Question which will at least remove any doubt about them. My belief is that the diplomacy of the last two years has furnished the history of the nineteenth century with its strangest, its saddest, and I must not scruple to add, its most disgraceful chapter; and in a review of the facts I also think that each of us, or of those who may come after us, will desire to find that the share of his own country in it has been small, and will wish it had been none at all."

Then followed an open letter to the Duke of Westminster upon the same problem replete with much lofty sentiment, but characterized also by a somewhat controversial tone. As each succeeding birthday anniversary came and went, the press voiced the ever-growing popular admiration of the aged statesman's virility and earnestness, and up to the autumn of 1896 he seems to have shown no signs of serious physical weakening. About that time, however, it became apparent to Mr. Gladstone's physicians that his heart was growing weaker, and was liable to failure in the not distant future. Despite this fact a visit was paid to Scotland in September, 1897, and more driving and exposure to the weather indulged in than was altogether desirable. Not long afterwards Mr. Gladstone began to suffer considerable irritation about the head and face, and a thorough examination by Dr. Dobie and others resulted in the discovery of what seemed to be a mere swelling of the mucous membrane. The appearance of the nose did not suggest more than this, and no special alarm was felt.

A resort to the sunny climate of Cannes, which had always agreed well with the patient, was therefore advised, and on November 26th, accompanied by Mrs. Gladstone, Miss Gladstone, and Mr. Henry Gladstone, he started, and reached his destination without suffering any ill effects. He was soon busy re-reading some of Scott's novels, and in the continuance of various theological studies for which purpose a number of works had been brought to his temporary home. Unfortunately, however, the expected improvement did not take place, the nose and cheek showed more alarming symptoms, his strength and energy decreased, and on January 31st, 1898, Dr. Frank, who was in constant attendance, announced his distinguished patient's condition to have become exceedingly serious. It was decided to return to England, and on February 19th he arrived in London, where his changed and frail appearance was the subject of general sorrow and comment. After a few days at his son's residence in Carlton House Terrace it was decided to go to Bournmouth, where Lord Vernon had placed his beautiful home at Mr. Gladstone's disposal.

No improvement followed, however. On March 6th all work was stopped, on the 20th of the month he returned to Hawarden, and early in April he finally took to his bed. No operation was performed for the growth in the nose and


Lord Salisbury.
Prince of Wales
Mr. Balfour.
Duke of Rutland.
Lord Rendel.
Sir William Harcourt
Duke of Norfolk.
Lord Rosebery.
Mr. Armistead

THE FUNERAL OF MR. GLADSTONE.

The cortège passing along the nave of Westminster Abbey.

Drawn by Mr. S. Begg, *The Illustrated London News* Special Artist.

T. Walter Wilson R.I.

THE FUNERAL OF MR. GLADSTONE.

The public viewing the lying-in-state in Westminster Hall.

Drawn by T. Walter Wilson, R I., The Special Artist of *The Illustrated London News.*

cheek, as it was deliberately decided, by all concerned, that the uncertain and brief prolongation of life resulting to the aged patient could not be a sufficient compensation for the suffering inflicted upon him. Day by day Mr. Gladstone now grew weaker. Pain was frequent and sometimes very severe, but it was borne in silent patience under the gentle and beautiful ministrations of his much loved wife. From time to time pathetic farewells were said to friends and relations and followers—two of the last being his trusted colleagues of old, Lord Rosebery and Mr. John Morley. Then came the peaceful end of a great and stirring life. In the middle of May, England and the world were made aware that this vast figure upon the national canvas was slowly and surely passing away. Hawarden Castle focussed the attention of the world. The Queen sent constant messages of inquiry. The Prince of Wales telegraphed on the 18th of the month to Mr. Henry Gladstone that, "My thoughts are with you, your mother and your family at the trying time you are experiencing. God grant that your father does not suffer." In this brief utterance the Prince with characteristic comprehension included and summarized the feelings of the nation. The idea of the old statesman suffering in his last moments was abhorrent to the feelings of every one, and the happy and peaceful termination of his struggle with death was in that sense a blessed relief. Death came at five o'clock on the morning of May 19th.

A nation had watched by the sick bed at Hawarden, and it was natural that a national funeral with all of pomp and state that a people's sorrow and admiration could give should follow. On the succeeding day therefore Lord Salisbury moved in the House of Lords, and Mr. Balfour in the Commons an Address to the Queen asking that a public funeral in Westminster Abbey be given the remains of one whom the Prime Minister described in his speech as "the most distinguished political name in this century." It was also decided that a monument should be erected to his memory in England's noble Abbey. The speeches in both Houses were upon a high level. Lord Salisbury summed up the life of Mr. Gladstone as that of "a great Christian man." Lord Rosebery spoke of his enormous power of concentration, the wide range at which he touched the intellectual life of the country and the depth of his Christian faith. Sir William Harcourt spoke of his intense sincerity, his magnanimity, and described him as not only a great statesman but a "great gentleman."

On May 28th, and for the first time since the death of Lord Palmerston, a State funeral was held at Westminster. In the procession from Westminster Hall were four hundred members of the House of Commons, two hundred members of the House of Lords, the members of the last Gladstone Cabinet, Ambassadors and other leading men, the Duke of Connaught, the Duke of Cambridge, and the Earl of Pembroke representing the Queen. Around the coffin in the Abbey, as pall-bearers, stood the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the

Marquess of Salisbury, the Earl of Kimberley, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir William Harcourt, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Rosebery, Mr. George Armistead and Lord Rendel. The stately and splendid and sorrowful ceremonies were soon over, and:

"In streaming London's central roar,
The sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones forever more."

The end had at last come to the myriad activities of Mr. Gladstone, but "of famous men the whole world is the tomb," and while the final verdict of history may differ in some respects from the voice of contemporaries, the feelings of passing multitudes, and the statements of critics it will, beyond all question, place him amongst the greatest of popular leaders, the noblest of personal characters, and the most brilliant of orators in all the ages.

Wilfrid Laurier

THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILFRID LAURIER, M.P.

Prime Minister of Canada.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

PERSONAL TRIBUTE BY THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILFRID LAURIER, G.C.M.G., PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA.

ENGLAND has lost the most illustrious of her sons; but the loss is not England's alone, nor is it confined to the great Empire which acknowledges England's suzerainty, nor even to the proud race which can claim kinship with the people of England. The loss is the loss of mankind. Mr. Gladstone gave his whole life to his country; but the work which he did for his country was conceived and carried out on principles of such high elevation, for purposes so noble and aims so lofty, that not his country alone, but the whole of mankind, benefited by his work. It is no exaggeration to say that he has raised the standard of civilization, and the world to-day is undoubtedly better for both the precept and the example of his life. His death is mourned not only by England, the land of his birth, not only by Scotland, the land of his ancestors, not only by Ireland, for which he did so much, and attempted to do so much more; but also by the people of the two Sicilies, for whose outraged rights he once aroused the conscience of Europe, by the people of the Ionian Islands, whose independence he secured, by the people of Bulgaria and the Danubian provinces, in whose cause he enlisted the sympathy of his own native country. Indeed, since the days of Napoleon, no man has lived whose name has travelled so far and so wide over the surface of the earth; no man has lived whose name alone so deeply moved the hearts of so many millions of men. Whereas Napoleon impressed his tremendous personality upon peoples far and near by the strange fascination which the genius of war has always exercised over the imagination of men in all lands and in all ages, the name of Gladstone had come to be, in the minds of all civilized nations, the living incarnation of right against might—the champion, the dauntless, tireless champion of the oppressed against the oppressor. It is, I believe, equally true to say that he was the most marvellous mental organization which the world has seen since Napoleon—certainly the most compact, the most active and the most universal.

This last half century in which we live has produced many able and strong men who, in different walks of life, have attracted the attention of the world at large; but of the men who have illustrated this age, it seems to me that in the eyes of posterity four will outlive and outshine all others—Cavour, Lincoln, Bismarck and Gladstone. If we look simply at the magnitude of the results obtained, compared with the exiguity of the resources at command—if we remember that out of the small kingdom of Sardinia grew United Italy, we must come to the conclusion that Count Cavour was undoubtedly a statesman of marvellous skill and prescience. Abraham Lincoln, unknown to fame when he was elected to the Presidency, exhibited a power for the government of men which has scarcely been surpassed in any age. He saved the American Union, he enfranchised the black race, and for the task he had to perform he was endowed in some respects almost miraculously. No man ever displayed a greater insight into the motives, the complex motives, which shape the public opinion of a free country, and he possessed almost to the degree of an instinct, the supreme quality in a statesman of taking the right decision, taking it at the right moment, and expressing it in language of incomparable felicity. Prince Bismarck was the embodiment of resolute common sense, unflinching determination, relentless strength, moving onward to his ends and crushing everything in his way as unconcernedly as fate itself. Mr. Gladstone undoubtedly excelled every one of these men. He had in his person a combination of varied powers of the human intellect, rarely to be found in one single individual. He had the imaginative fancy, the poetic conception of things, in which Count Cavour was deficient. He had the aptitude for business, the financial ability which Lincoln never exhibited. He had the lofty impulses, the generous inspirations which Prince Bismarck always discarded, even if he did not treat them with scorn. He was at once an orator, a statesman, a poet, and a man of business. As an orator he stands certainly in the very front rank of orators of his country or any country, of his age or any age. I remember, when Louis Blanc was in England, in the days of the Second Empire, he used to write to the press of Paris, and in one of his letters to "Le Temps" he stated that Mr. Gladstone would undoubtedly have been the foremost orator of England if it were not for the existence of Mr. Bright. It may be admitted, and I think it is admitted generally, that on some occasions Mr. Bright reached heights of grandeur and pathos which even Mr. Gladstone did not attain. But Mr. Gladstone had an ability, a vigour, a fluency which no man in his age or any age ever rivalled or even approached. That is not all. To his marvellous mental powers he added no less marvellous physical gifts. He had the eye of a god, the voice of a silver bell; and the very fire of his eye, the very music of his voice, swept the hearts of men even before they had been dazzled by the torrents of his eloquence.

As a statesman, it was the good fortune of Mr. Gladstone that his career was not associated with war. The reforms which he effected, the triumphs which he achieved, were not won by the supreme arbitrament of the sword. The reforms which he effected and the triumphs which he achieved were the result of his power of persuasion over his fellow men. The reforms which he achieved in many ways amounted to a revolution. They changed, in many particulars, the face of the realm. After Sir Robert Peel had adopted the great principle which eventually carried England from protection to free trade, it was

Mr. Gladstone who created the financial system which has been admitted ever since by all students of finance as the secret of Great Britain's commercial success. He enforced the extension of the suffrage to the masses of the nation and practically thereby made the Government of monarchical England as democratic as that of any republic. He disestablished the Irish Church; he introduced reform into the land tenure, and brought hope into the breasts of those tillers of the soil in Ireland who had for so many generations laboured in despair. And all this he did, not by force or violence, but simply by the power of his eloquence and the strength of his personality.

Great, however, as were the acts of the man, after all he was of the human flesh, and for him, as for everybody else, there were trivial and low duties to be performed. It is no exaggeration to say that even in those low and trivial duties he was great. He ennobled the common realities of life. His was above all things a religious mind—essentially religious in the highest sense of the term. And the religious sentiment which dominated his public life and his speeches, that same sentiment, according to the testimony of those who knew him best, also permeated all his actions from the highest to the humblest. He was a man of strong and pure affections, of long and lasting friendship, and to describe the beauty of his domestic life no words of praise can be adequate. It was simply ideally beautiful, and in the later years of his life as touching as it was beautiful. May I be permitted, without any impropriety, to recall that it was my privilege to experience and to appreciate that courtesy, made up of dignity and grace, which was famous all over the world, but of which no one could have an appropriate opinion unless he had been the recipient of it. In a character so complex and diversified, one may be asked what was the dominant feature, what was the supreme quality, the one characteristic which marked the nature of the man. Was it his incomparable genius for finance? Was it his splendid oratorical powers? Was it his marvellous fecundity of mind? In my estimation, it was not any one of those qualities. Great as they were, there was one still more marked, and if I have to give my own impression, I would say that the one trait which was dominant in his nature, which marked the man more distinctively than any other, was his intense humanity, his paramount sense of right, his abhorrence of injustice, wrong and oppression, wherever to be found or in whatever shape they might show themselves. Injustice, wrong, oppression, acted upon him, as it were, mechanically, and aroused every fibre of his being, and from that moment, to the repairing of the injustice, the undoing of the wrong, and the destruction of the oppression, he gave his mind, his heart, his soul, his whole life, with an energy, with an intensity, with a vigour paralleled in no man unless it be the First Napoleon. There are many evidences of this in his life. When he was travelling in southern Italy, as a tourist, for pleasure and for the benefit of the health of his family, he became aware of the abominable system which was there prevailing under the name of constitutional government. He left everything aside, even the object which had brought him to Italy, and applied himself to investigate and to collect evidence, and then denounced the abominable system in a trumpet blast of such power that it shook to its very foundation the throne of King Ferdinand and sent it tottering to its fall. Again, when he was sent as High Commissioner to the Ionian Islands, the Hellenic population separated from the rest of Greece, separated from the kingdom to which they were adjacent and towards which all their aspirations were raised, struck his generous soul with such force that he became practically their advocate and secured their independence. Again, when he had withdrawn from public life, and when, in the language of Thiers, under somewhat similar circumstances, he had returned to "ses chères études," the atrocities perpetrated by the Turks on the people of Bulgaria brought him back to public life with a vehemence, an impetuosity, and a torrent of fierce indignation that swept everything before it. If this be, as I think it is, the one distinctive feature of his character, it seems to explain away what are called the inconsistencies of his life. Inconsistencies there were none in his life. He had been brought up in the most unbending school of Toryism. He became the most active Reformer of our own times. But whilst he became the leader of the Liberal party and an active Reformer, it is only due to him to say that in his complex mind there was a vast space for what is known as Conservatism. His mind was not only liberal but conservative as well, and he clung to the affections of his youth until, in questions of practical moment, he found them clashing with that sense of right and abhorrence of injustice of which I have spoken. But the moment he found his conservative affections clash with what he thought right and just, he did not hesitate to abandon his former convictions and go the whole length of the reforms demanded. Thus, he was always devotedly, filially, lovingly attached to the Church of England. He loved it, as he often declared. He adhered to it as an establishment in England, but the very reasons and arguments which, in his mind, justified the establishment of the Church in England, compelled him to a different course as far as that church was concerned in Ireland. In England the church was the church of the majority, of almost the unanimity of the nation. It Ireland it was the church of the minority, and therefore he did not hesitate. His course was clear; he removed the one church and maintained the other. So it was with Home Rule, but coming to this subject of Home Rule, though there may be much to say, perhaps this is neither the occasion nor the place to say it.

England is to-day in tears, but fortunate is the nation which has produced such a man. His years are over, but his work is not closed; his work is still going on. The example which he gave to the world shall live forever, and the seed which he has sown with such a copious hand shall still germinate and bear fruit under the full light of heaven.

MR. AND MRS. GLADSTONE IN CARRIAGE AT CANNES.

Photograph by Numa Blanc, Cannes, France.

THE FUNERAL OF MR. GLADSTONE.

Our Future King offering his condolence to Mrs. Gladstone at the graveside in Westminster Abbey.

Drawn by Mr. A. Forestier *The Illustrated London News* Special Artist.

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Author's Note to Memorial Edition

LORD ROSEBERY has somewhere observed that the Life of Mr. Gladstone when it came to be written would have to be undertaken by a limited liability company. No one can study the history of the present century without feeling the full force of this remark; certainly no one can appreciate it more fully than I have done. In venturing upon the attempt at all, I have been actuated by a profound belief in the value to us all of British institutions; the interest attaching to British political development during this century; the importance of comprehending, even in a general and sweeping way, the springs of British Parliamentary action during the past sixty or seventy years; the desire to extend a knowledge of British public life in the high phases which Mr. Gladstone's career has embodied.

Distance in space from the scene of his struggles and achievements may help in giving this biography something, at least, of the impartiality which distance in time is usually expected to give. Whatever our political sympathies, any study of the prolonged period here dealt with must inspire impartial men with a strong belief in Mr. Gladstone's sincerity of mind and powers of deep conviction. After all, the two streams of thought and practice perceptible in British politics are reconcilable with the most absolute sincerity and personal honour, and even statesmanship, amongst the leaders of the two great parties. There will always be the tendency to preserve present institutions and rule by precedent, and the opposing tendency to reform, and change, and restless effort. Both are good in their action and reaction within the constitution of the realm or the bounds of the Empire, and the combination of the two in one person tends to enhance the remarkable nature and interest of Mr. Gladstone's career. Hence the value of the beautiful tribute uttered by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the House of Commons of Canada, and which he has partly embodied in the chapter which closes this volume.

If, in conclusion, this Memorial Edition of a work which has been kindly received by the public and the press, as dealing especially with Mr. Gladstone's myriad-sided career from a broad Imperial point of view, should help a little in further promoting knowledge and appreciation of British institutions and British political ideals, I shall be more than grateful.

J. CASTELL HOPKINS.